Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT • NUMBER FIVE • NOVEMBER 1989

Is the West Bank a Vital American Interest?
Daniel Pipes

Toward a Real Restoration of Civil Rights
Terry Eastland

What Glasnost Has Destroyed
Leon Aron

Anti-Semitism and Jewish Identity
Michael A. Meyer

Remembering Sidney Hook
Joseph Epstein

Of Time and Poetry
Dan Jacobson

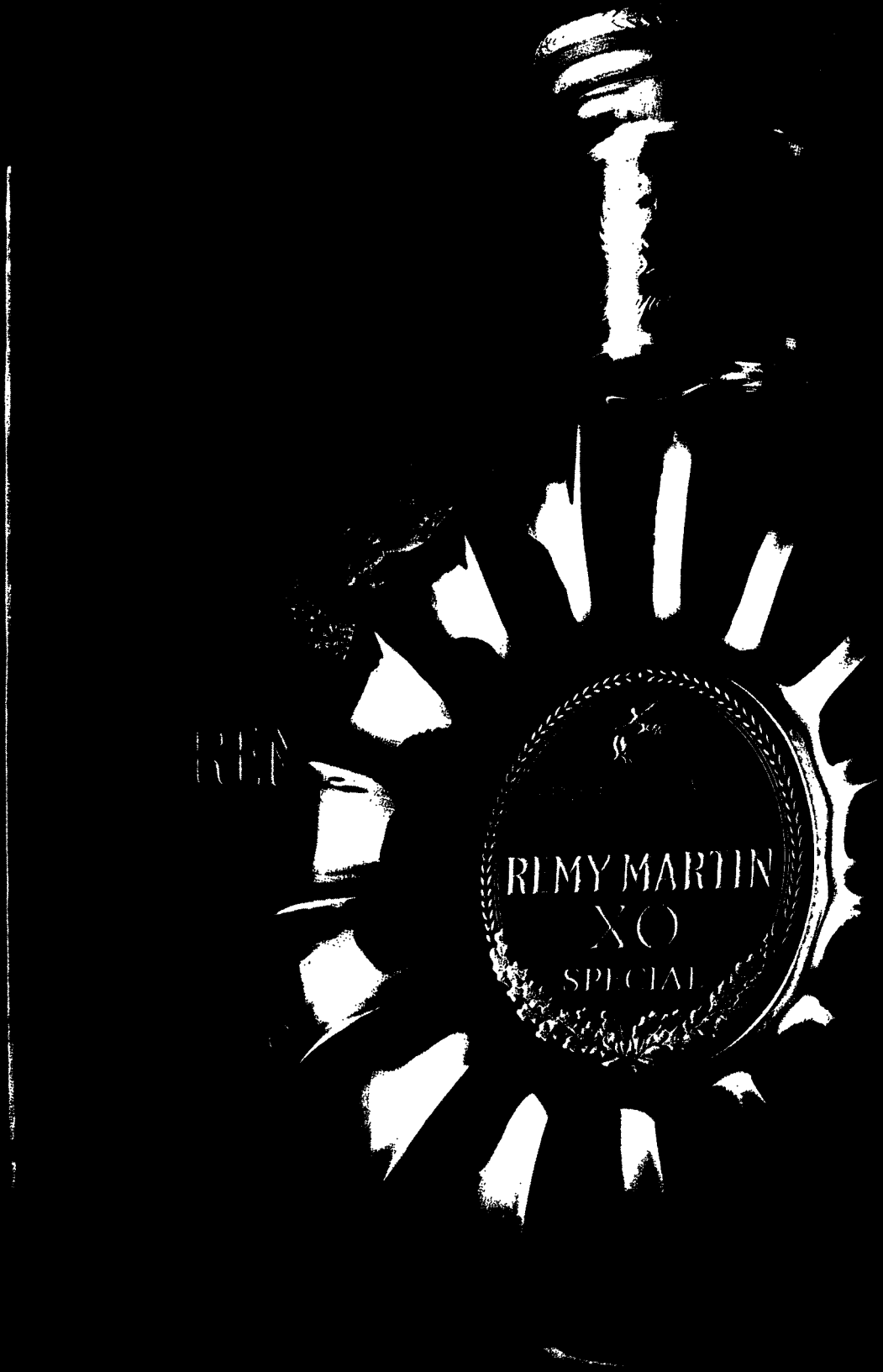
Anatomy of an Execution
Arturo J. Cruz, Jr.

Fiction: A Turning of the Critical Tide?
Carol Iannone

Books in Review: Charlotte Low Allen / Arch Puddington / David Singer / David Brock / Chester E. Finn, Jr.

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE / $3.75

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Appreciate the Appreciation

Exclusively Fine Champagne Cognac

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commentary

VOLUME 88 NUMBER FIVE *NOVEMBER 1989*

Articles 19 Is the West Bank a Vital American Interest? *Daniel Pipes*

25 Toward a Real Restoration of Civil Rights *Terry Eastland*

30 What Glasnost Has Destroyed *Leon Aron*

35 Anti-Semitism and Jewish Identity *Michael A. Meyer*

41 Remembering Sidney Hook *Joseph Epstein*

48 Of Time and Poetry *Dan Jacobson*

Observations 54 Anatomy of an Execution *Arturo J. Cruz, Jr.*

Fiction 57 A Turning of the Critical Tide? *Carol Iannone*

Letters 2 from *Vladimir Bukovsky, Mihajlo Mihajlov, Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., Patrick Glynn, Donald Vogel, Timothy W. Ryback, Milton Birnbaum, Irvin Stock, Morris Pollard, Bernard R. Henderson, Eliot A. Cohen, Philip Hochstein, Mitchell Bard,* and others

Books in Review 60 The Second Shift, by Arlie Hochschild *Charlotte Low Allen*

62 Mad Dreams, Saving Graces, by Michael T. Kaufman *Arch Puddington*

65 Jewish-Christian Dialogue, by David Novak *David Singer*

67 Modern Chile, 1970-1989, by Mark Falcoff *David Brock*

70 Straight Shooting, by John Silber *Chester E. Finn, Jr.*

Editor: Norman Podhoretz

Executive Editor: Neal Kozodoy

Managing Editor: Marion Magid

Associate Editor: Brenda Brown

Production Manager: Bruce Lodi

Circulation Manager: Helene Hansen

COMMENTARY (ISSN 0010-2601) is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is $3.75, $39 a year; 2 years $72, 3 years $105—Add $8.00 per year for all foreign subscriptions, including Canada and Latin America—Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.
Copyright © 1989 by the American Jewish Committee; all rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions—Indexed in *Reader's Guide, Book Review Digest, Public Affairs Information Service, Index to Jewish Periodicals, ABC Pol Sci, Historical Abstracts, Religion Index One: Periodicals, Political Science Abstracts,* and *America: History and Life*—Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.
EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Statement of Aims

In sponsoring COMMENTARY, the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY's contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of COMMENTARY by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
Sholom D. Comay, *President*

The Commentary Publication Committee

Howard I. Friedman, *Chairman*

Norman E. Alexander
Maurice S. Binkow
Donald M. Blinken
Theodore Ellenoff
Edward E. Elson
Stephen Friedman
Lawrence Goldmuntz
Mark Goodson
Robert H. Haines
Herman J. Obermayer
Robert L. Pelz
Ned Pines
Frederick P. Rose
Gordon S. Rosenblum
Michael Saperstein
Michael W. Schwartz
Nanette Scofield
Henry Sherman
John Slawson
Laurence A. Tisch

Letters from Readers

Gorbachev & the U.S.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., in "Gorbachev's Cultural Revolution" [August], reminds us once again that our side has still to work out a coherent response to the "new thinking" in the Soviet Union. After a half-year of deliberation, the Bush administration emerged with a decision which would have been the envy of King Solomon, namely, neither to help nor to hinder *perestroika*—in other words, not to have a policy at all. Why did it take so long to reinvent American isolationism?

In a way, I sympathize with the administration's predicament. American foreign policy is a notoriously blunt instrument, incapable of subtlety, and past attempts to implement a "sophisticated" policy have invariably ended in disaster (cf. the détente of the 1970's), while "simplistic" policies—containment, for example—have brought a modest success. Hence the tendency to opt for a simple one-liner, which is hard to do in the present crisis.

But the current non-policy is hardly a solution, because the monumental drama unfolding in the Communist world is unlikely to leave America in the position of a mere spectator. As the massacre in Tiananmen Square shows, no one, least of all the American public, can maintain an attitude of benevolent neutrality in a world in agony. Besides, those who *know* what they want are bound to seize the initiative and to hijack East-West relations in its name. In short, the United States must define its interests, its goals, and the means of attaining them, otherwise it will stumble into a policy like a blind giant, only to find itself on what may be the wrong side of the conflict.

This brings me to the questions dealt with by Mr. Fairbanks: the dangers of the Soviet crisis, its possible course and outcome. Ironically, most of us who write on this subject seem to agree on every point. We certainly agree that *glasnost* and *perestroika* mean different things for the Soviet leadership on the one hand and for the Soviet public on the other: while for the former they signal a *change of policy*, designed to save the system, for the latter they are an opportunity to *change the system*. Yet in spite of this consensus, we have still failed to work out clear-cut recommendations, or to start advocating them in a single voice. I am not a great proponent of conferences or symposia, but perhaps we could use a get-together of like-minded people for this purpose.

There is, in my view, a basis for a policy simple enough to be implemented even by existing mechanisms, yet sophisticated enough to grapple with the problem. After all, even George Bush, his non-policy notwithstanding, was obliged to voice his support for the opposition in Poland and Hungary in order to counter the Soviet "peace" offensive in Europe. There is simply no other adequate response to the stunning success of the "new thinking." But why has the United States stopped short of developing a real policy along these lines? Why could the President not muster a single word with which to condemn the massacre in Tbilisi, or a word of sympathy for the Baltic people striving for their national independence? A trip to Eastern Europe, successful as it may be, is a poor substitute for a consistent policy of support for those forces in the Communist world that seek actively to dismantle socialism.

What could be more natural for America, with its deeply rooted sympathy for national independence, and its freedom-loving spirit, than to be on the side of those nations in the Soviet empire striving for independence? What could be more natural for the President than to adopt a policy with such a popular appeal? And yet no one in government seems to be willing to speak out loudly in such terms. Are they, are we, afraid of causing a conflict? But the conflict has already spent itself, after raging for a half-century and more. Are we afraid of causing bloodshed? But there will be bloodshed in any case, and American support for the democratic forces can only *reduce* the total amount. Nothing is bloodier than a chaotic clash between a disorganized crowd and a scared regime which has no one on the opposite side to negotiate with. By contrast, the stronger the opposition in the Communist world, the better it will be organized, the more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PARK AVENUE

Its style and quality show.

At a glance you'll know that this is a motorcar of rare quality and real substance: the 1990 Buick Park Avenue. It is an automobile of exacting fit and finish. And, in fact, Buick ranks among the most trouble free American brands. According to one measure – the J.D. Power and Associates 1989 Initial Quality Survey – the Buick Electra Park Avenue* was among the most trouble free American luxury cars*, ranking ahead of both the Lincoln Mark VII and Lincoln Continental. Drive the latest edition of the Park Avenue which reflects your good sense as well as your good taste. Buick Park Avenue. An automobile with the substance and solidity to command the Great American Road.

For more information, call 1-800-441-5373.

The Great American Road belongs to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GM

1989 GM Corp. All rights reserved. Park Avenue is a registered trademark of Buick Motor Division, General Motors Corporation. *Driver Shown is optional Ami Park Avenue.
*J.D. Power and Associates 1989 Initial Quality Survey covering November and December 1988. Based on owner reported problems during the first 90 days of ownership.

authority it will exercise, and the less blood will be spilled—as we have seen in Poland. If only 1 percent of the astronomical sums donated by the West to Gorbachev—sums which at best will be wasted on saving socialism, at worst will be used against us—were invested in the opposition, we would be creating the chance for a relatively bloodless transition.

So, my one-line policy recommendation is: You want to see democracy in the Soviet Union? Support the democratic opposition!

VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY
Cambridge, England

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr.'s article is the most penetrating analysis I have yet seen of what Gorbachev is up to, and of the dangers and opportunities presented by the "terminal crisis" of the Soviet Union. Mr. Fairbanks rightly rejects as wishful thinking the common view of Gorbachev as a mere pragmatic reformer, emphasizing instead his titanic ambition and his unprecedented and potentially explosive mobilization of long-suppressed dissatisfactions within the Soviet system. The most interesting question left unanswered by Mr. Fairbanks's excellent discussion is to what extent Gorbachev himself is aware of the seriousness of his own predicament. Does he not see that (in Mr. Fairbanks's words) his "cultural revolution is . . . close to spinning out of control"? Or does he have such supreme confidence in his improvisatory abilities that he believes he can indefinitely sow the wind without reaping the whirlwind?

H. W. JOHNS
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In your August issue I read a brilliant and insightful article by Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., "Gorbachev's Cultural Revolution." As an analyst/commentator for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and someone who follows closely day-to-day developments in the Soviet Union as well as Western policy, I fully agree with the thoughts and conclusions of the article. An interview with the émigré writer Alexander Zinoviev, which appeared in a recent issue of Moscow *News*, also lends support to Mr. Fairbanks's argument.

MIHAJLO MIHAJLOV
Washington, D. C.

CHARLES H. FAIRBANKS, JR. writes:

I am pleased that Vladimir Bukovsky and Mihajlo Mihajlov, who know the reality of Communist politics better than I ever could, share my reading of the current situation, and I appreciate H.W. Johns's thoughtful comments.

Mr. Johns poses the perplexing question of how Gorbachev understands his situation. It seems in retrospect that in the early 80's it was widely felt within the Soviet ruling class that the system was moving toward a crisis, but that no one, including Gorbachev, understood the depth of popular anger against the system. There are certainly indications that some of Gorbachev's supporters were astonished by the fearsomeness of the genie they called up. After all, these were members of an isolated and protected ruling class who customarily invoked ritualized versions of genuine popular feelings (such as Russian and non-Russian nationalisms) within a rigid political framework that contained the effects very neatly. They wanted to make the party political again without ever having experienced open politics.

Gorbachev, too, was surprised, but I suspect he has inwardly been more thrilled than disappointed. His Leninist training may have prepared him to face the unexpected side-effects of his mobilization campaign. Leninism emphasizes how often a disaster turns out to be an opportunity in disguise. When there have been no real dangers, Leninist politicians have created phony ones: Stalin began saying in 1928 that the USSR was about to be invaded; Gorbachev began claiming *perestroika* was about to be reversed soon after he became General Secretary. Gorbachev the man is ready for this brand of politics. He is like a bird that enjoys flying straight into the thunderstorm. He thrives on disorder, struggle, risk, and danger. Gorbachev seems to have a supreme confidence that whatever develops, he will somehow be able to handle it. The rational basis for his confidence lies in his double position as leader of the opposition and head of state. In principle, the greater the discontent he looses, the farther his enemies are forced back and, at the same time, the more he is needed to cope with it. A brilliant formula, *so far*.

Like Mr. Bukovsky, I was surprised at our reaction to the Baltic autonomy movements and to the experiment in terror in Tbilisi. I agree with his powerful call for a policy of forthright support for the forces that seek actively to dismantle socialism. The Bush administration has a few quiet years to strengthen pro-Western forces in the world before the existing international order cracks and we are hit by the instabilities now being created every day. Instead the administration conveys a sense of drift.

Mr. Bukovsky convinces me that a well-organized opposition, like Solidarity, is likely not to increase the chances of bloodshed and instability but to reduce them. When we say, as the administration often does, that we want Gorbachev to go farther, without saying what we expect him to create or protect, we are (it is now apparent) encouraging a process of unraveling without an end point.

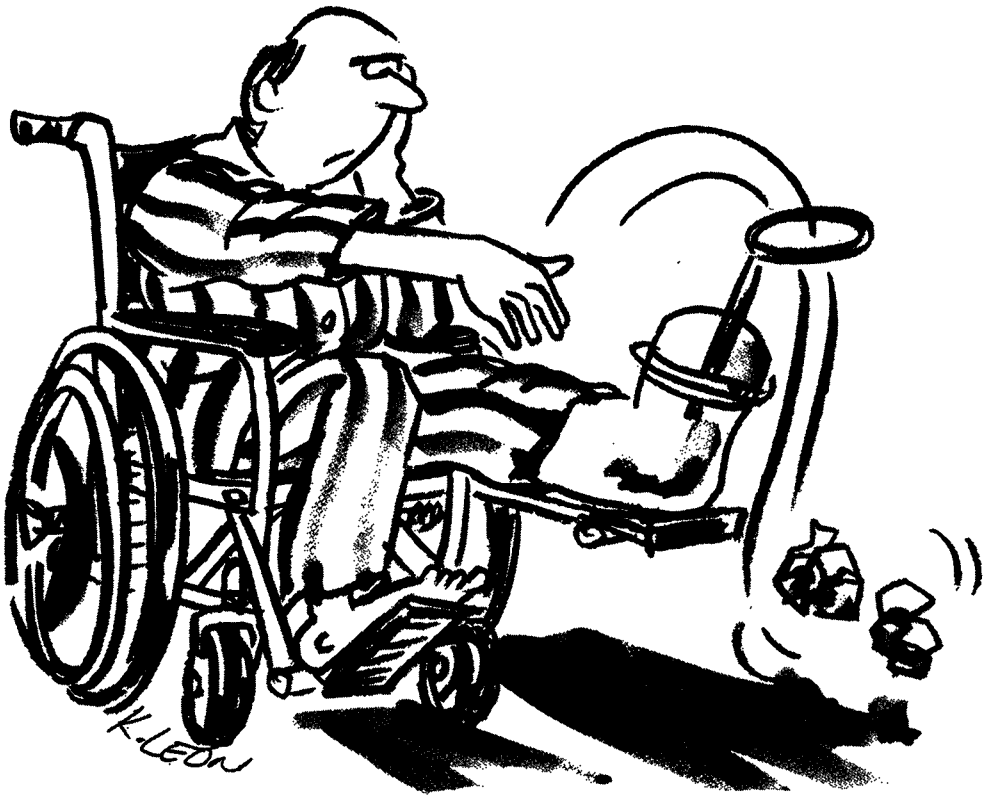
But it is not only the Bush administration that, as Mr. Bukovsky says, is rediscovering isolationism. The problem seems to me wider. From many of those who most successfully resisted Soviet power in the Reagan years, we are hearing a great deal about what we should not be giving to Gorbachev and the Eastern European governments and very little about what we *should* be giving to the freedom movements in those countries and about how we can help them win. I still think that this is the most serious and principled segment of the political debate, but principle can easily turn into a tendency to abstain from effort, abstain from spending and sacrifice, just as for our ancestors principle once meant abstaining from enjoyment.

It reminds one strangely of the time when we as a nation savored our moral principles with Jimmy Carter's human-rights policy. I believe that the enthusiasts for that policy genuinely felt for the sufferings of the peasants in Guatemala and El Salvador, yet what we were to do for them in practice seemed to come down to *not* giving their governments security assistance, *not* giving them loans, *not* having summits with their leaders. These recurrent patterns in American history ought to evoke in us real reflection.

Mr. Bukovsky reminds us of the contradiction between our listlessness toward the Soviet and Eastern European freedom movements and the universal outrage over the Tiananmen Square massacre. This

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What would several months in this position do to your financial position?



If you're unable to work due to a major injury or prolonged illness, you could find yourself in a very uncomfortable financial position.

Because while you're losing income, the monthly bills keep coming. And when you add on medical expenses to mortgage, credit and car payments, before you know it, your financial security could be seriously threatened.

That's why The Equitable has developed Individual Health Plans to help protect you and your family against the risks associated with disability and medical bills.

Our disability income plans* will protect your greatest asset—your earnings—while our major medical plans** will reduce the financial drain which can result from extensive medical care.

Call 1-800-782-9355 or send in the coupon for more information. If you're a business owner, be sure to ask about our new disability buy-out and key person plans, too. The Equitable also offers a complete portfolio of traditional and investment-sensitive life products, a full range of annuities and other financial service products.

To: D.C. Geraghty, Vice President
The Equitable
Box 2455, General Post Office
New York, NY 10016

Please send me full details of Equitable's
☐ Personal Disability Income Plans
☐ Business Protection Disability Plans
☐ Personal Major Medical Plans
☐ Other Equitable Products and Services

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number ( ) _____

The EQUITABLE
Financial Companies
Health Insurance Products

WE HAVE GREAT PLANS FOR YOU

*These policies provide disability income insurance only. They do NOT provide basic hospital, basic medical or major medical insurance as defined by the New York State Insurance Department. The expected benefit ratio for these policies is 55 percent. This ratio is the portion of the future premiums which the company expects to return as benefits, when averaged over all people with a policy.

**These policies meet the minimum standards for major medical insurance as defined by the New York State Insurance Department. They do NOT provide basic hospital or basic medical insurance. The expected benefit ratio for these policies is 55 percent. This ratio is the portion of the future premiums which the company expects to return as benefits, when averaged over all people with a policy.

©1989 The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the U.S., N.Y., N.Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unanimity was a surprise; the voices in favor of the Chinese dictatorship on the grounds that it had brought equality and "justice" have been, for now, silenced, as well as the voices of those who took pride in realpolitik. But the contradiction remains: we condemn Communism but do little for freedom. And this too is reminiscent of the 19th century, when Americans were wild about Kossuth and his revolt against the Austrian empire but stayed on our side of the water. Then we had good excuses: we had our own evil, slavery, to cope with, and an open frontier. We had a continent to mold. Now everything has been done and the world seems to have grown old. We may feel that we are at the end of history. But just at this moment the future opens up again. In the Soviet bloc a cruel system of power is decaying and will be replaced—by what? It is the last frontier.

Gorbachev & Germany

To the Editor of Commentary:

It would be nice to believe that Patrick Glynn's cogent warnings against starry-eyed optimism in current public discourse on U.S.-Soviet relations will be accepted, and that realism will prevail in discussions of Soviet foreign policy ["The Dangers Beyond Containment," August]. Unfortunately, that is not likely to be the case unless the mounting internal pressures Gorbachev faces, and/or Western appearances of weakness, or some combination thereof, allow the Soviet dictator to believe he can successfully execute an operation, such as an invasion of Afghanistan or Czechoslovakia, that would strike at vital Western interests. . . .

Of the many fine points in Mr. Glynn's article, particular mention should be made of his emphasis on the increasing detachment of West Germany from the NATO alliance. There are several factors responsible for this, including the INF treaty, continual Soviet overtures to West Germany, the dangerously seductive current idea of a "common European home," West Germany's desire for unification, and the partial recrudescence of German nationalism as embodied in the renewed advocacy of "*Mitteleuropa*." All these factors contribute to current West German vacillation, . . . but there is a further factor afflicting the West German body politic. That factor is the . . . historical amnesia and moral cowardice of both the West German government and public in failing to recognize the unremitting antagonism between the Soviet Union and the Western alliance, and in failing to accept that its geographic location will continue to make West Germany a potential or actual fulcrum of . . . conflict. Unfortunately, the very successes of NATO in maintaining peace, and even the partial advancement of freedom in Eastern Europe, have left West Germany a morally enervated society more concerned with promoting its dubious economic interests in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union than in defending West German interests in Western Europe and overseas. . . .

To reverse this drift toward neutralism, West Germany's leaders must seize the initiative and . . . tell their people that German reunification is an illusory dream, that a unified and domineering Central European power instigated two world wars, and that Mikhail Gorbachev's ultimate foreign-policy goal in Europe is not peace but rather the neutralization of West Germany and the dismemberment of the Western alliance. . . . Such pronouncements will not be popular or cost-free, of course, and will be denounced as militarism or anachronistic cold-war rhetoric. Nevertheless, West German leaders such as Chancellor Helmut Kohl must warn their people that historical delusions about oncoming "eras of international peace" eventually resulted in conflicts with disastrous results.

Similar candor and realism must also characterize the pronouncements and policies of President Bush's administration and those of all freedom-loving nations. . . . Failure to enact appropriate and effective policies to defend the values we cherish will surely unleash the ghosts of war we aspire to avoid.

Bert Chapman
Lexington, Kentucky

Patrick Glynn writes:

While I appreciate Bert Chapman's passionate endorsement of my arguments, I cannot subscribe to his anti-German tone or to the imprudent policy prescriptions that follow from it. Let us be clear-headed. The problem we face today is not the prospect of a unified Germany that would revive the unspeakable horrors and evil of Nazism or, for that matter, the not inconsiderable threat posed by old-fashioned Prussian militarism. That is a chimera, a red herring. A unified Germany, under a West German-style government and firmly integrated into a strong NATO, would no more threaten world peace than does present-day Japan. As Aristotle pointed out, when the regime truly changes, so does the character of the citizen. Whatever its virtues or vices, the present-day West German regime is fundamentally different from the Nazi regime of the 1930's and its Wilhelmine forerunner. Moreover, West German citizens, especially younger citizens, are for the most part the *opposite* of bellicose—if anything, too pacifistic.

Rather, the problem would be a Finlandized Germany under effective Soviet control—a semi-autonomous state under the sway of Soviet power, capable of maintaining a strong economy linked to the West, and of supplying the Soviet military and military-industrial base with a steady flow of new technology and capital. It is to arrive at this not-so-inconceivable goal—i.e., to split West Germany from us, to our grave detriment and to the West Germans'—that the Soviets are playing on the unification theme.

As for candor among leaders, West German leaders certainly deserve their share of blame for the lack of realism and forthrightness about the continuing Soviet threat. But they are by no means alone, and they did not really start the trend. Margaret Thatcher has contributed to the present euphoric environment, and the major cause of the current euphoria was none other than Ronald Reagan himself. There is truth in Helmut Kohl's complaint. "When Mr. Gorbachev is in the White House and when they sing 'Moscow Nights,' " he said last February, "people ask themselves whether the threat is the same."

Senator Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming has observed that the first rule of alliance burden-sharing ought to be to share the burdens and responsibilities of leadership. By this he means, among other things, telling the truth. Unless and until officials in Washington stop talking drivel about "saving" Gorbachev and helping *perestroika* "succeed," there is no point in expecting heightened realism in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bonn. *We* are the leaders of the alliance, and it is up to us to set a tone of sobriety and candor. Unfortunately, even if we were to begin such a trend today, it would be a matter of some time, and no doubt some pain, before the present illusions in Western Europe—and especially in West Germany—could be dispelled.

The PLO

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick's article, "How the PLO Was Legitimized" [July], describes not only the PLO's political successes but, by implication, Israel and America's political defeats.

Israel must learn that not all battles involve a clash of arms, that it must take the political struggle as seriously as it does the military. So far, the PLO's political successes against Israel may have even greater significance than did Israel's 1967 military victory against the Arabs.

The U.S. must ask itself how its interests are furthered by the establishment of a Palestinian state next to Israel under the sponsorship of those who now sponsor the PLO and other terrorist groups. That is the only result its present policies can achieve. How does the U.S. define justice for both the Arab and Jewish populations of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza? In the pursuit of that elusive goal is it prepared to accept the elimination of Israel just as it suffered the loss of a pro-Western regime in Iran because of moral qualms? . . .

DONALD VOGEL
San Francisco, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick has . . . clearly and brilliantly delineated Yasir Arafat's long-range efforts to delegitimate Israel's membership in the family of nations. Arafat's propaganda victory in Stockholm was rendered all the more astounding by the number of American Jews who fell into line behind the other cows trudging to the barn. Thank you, Jeane Kirkpatrick, for your lucid and unsentimental gathering of the facts.

JULIUS LOHN
La Jolla, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick's article is a significant contribution to understanding the political uses of . . . the principle of self-determination as contained in the United Nations Charter. The article is important in evaluating the effects of this insidious process not only on the Palestine problem, but on all international disputes having their roots in decolonization. . . .

Ambassador Kirkpatrick shows how the General Assembly first arbitrarily defines a given situation as "colonial"—in this case the West Bank (though it has excluded other seemingly colonial situations like those of Eritrea, Kurdistan, Biafra, and the Republics of the Soviet Union)—and then extends recognition to a "people"—in this case the Palestinians—as qualified to exercise the right of self-determination. . . . It then goes a step farther . . . by recognizing only certain "liberation movements" as legitimate. In the case of Palestine, it is the PLO, elected by no one, which has been designated the "sole legitimate representative" of an undefined "people," empowered to lead that people to independence in an undefined territory.

This formula has allowed unrepresentative tyrannies to grab power in the aftermath of decolonization throughout Africa and the Middle East. It has also led to the civil war in Angola and helped destroy competitive liberation movements in Namibia and Zimbabwe. . . . In general, former colonial elites have been replaced by native elites which have usually proved to be far more incompetent and far more cruel to the people they rule than were their former colonial masters. In every case the basic principles of freedom and democracy have been compromised.

There is yet one more step to this process. . . . The UN does not just recognize that certain peoples have the right of self-determination. It also decides that these same peoples, led by their "sole legitimate representatives," have the right to wage war. The ensuing struggles—known as wars of "national liberation"—are not mere internal conflicts, . . . but rather international in scope.

Such conflicts, according to the

First Anniversary
Second Anniversary
Third Anniversary
Fourth Anniversary
Certainly she likes your annual gift of a nightgown.
But she'd have to be Rip Van Winkle to use all of them.
This year, tell her you'd marry her all over again.
The Diamond Anniversary Band.
A diamond is forever.
BEST·BEST for by.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

terms of this quasi-religious system, . . . must be perceived as automatically just, . . . and other states have the duty of assisting the "liberation movement" in imposing its domination. Since the General Assembly has often repeated that a colonial state cannot use force against a colonized people, the only right remaining to a state so defined is to be defeated while resisting the inevitable flow of history. A state thus damned as "colonial" even forfeits its right to self-defense. . . .

Ambassador Kirkpatrick shows that the United States has paid little attention to the evolution of this strategy at the UN. For whatever reasons, the battle is already lost. The rules of the game have been fixed and are only waiting to be applied to specific cases. It would seem that in the future Israel has little to hope for from the UN. The West can only attempt to limit the damage.

ROBERT GORELICK
Brussels, Belgium

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick's definitive study of the legitimization of the PLO is a perfect example of how that collusive majority which dominates the UN has overwhelmed reason with rancor. There are other issues also, such as disarmament and international terrorism, about which the UN has an equally long history of equivocation and evasion. To cite one such example, in 1976, the then-Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, condemned Israel's daring rescue at Entebbe as "a serious violation of the national sovereignty of a UN member state." Just as the UN has become a commentary on our times, so does the Waldheim affair comment upon the UN itself.

Waldheim first came to the UN in 1956 as a delegate. From 1964 to 1968 and again in 1970 he served as Austria's permanent representative to the UN. Two years later, in 1972, he became Secretary General and served in that post for ten years. . . . All the while that Waldheim was ensconced in this position, there was a file in the archives of the UN with enough prima-facie evidence to indict the Secretary General for war crimes. It is absolutely incomprehensible how that file and that man could have coexisted at the same time and place without the two intersecting. . . . But there was never either an inquiry or a statement. All that was forthcoming was the kind of cynical, baneful indifference which Jeane J. Kirkpatrick describes so incisively.

MITCHELL FINKEL
Silver Spring, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have just read Jeane J. Kirkpatrick's chilling account of how the PLO was legitimized. . . . I wish with deep yearning that Ambassador Kirkpatrick's exposition might be read by influential people outside the COMMENTARY orbit. . . .

WINIFRED SCOTT
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In the last few years, as Jeane J. Kirkpatrick notes in "How the PLO Was Legitimized," the PLO obtained, through diplomatic charlatanry and with the unlimited assistance of the world media, a propaganda victory in its quest to delegitimize the state of Israel. In order to combat such propaganda, I humbly suggest that essays like Ambassador Kirkpatrick's and Norman Podhoretz's "Israel: A Lamentation From the Future" [March] be reprinted in *all* major newspapers—local, national, and international. . . . This will be, I believe, a worthwhile investment in the cause of justice and peace in the Middle East.

BARUCH COHEN
Montreal, Canada

Novels

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joseph Epstein's discussion of the shortcomings of current literary studies is brilliant ["Educated by Novels," August]. I read the article twice, then I read it aloud to my wife, then I made copies of it and sent them to numerous colleagues who, I hope, will take time from their Barthes and Derrida (of late they have stopped reading Paul De Man), to consider Mr. Epstein's arguments.

Unfortunately, the theory-mongering that has dominated academia for the past decade advances the intellectual imperative that students be conversant with "theory." I have a simple solution for acquainting undergraduates with most of the current "lit-crit rhetoric": read *Literary Theory* by Terry Eagleton. In a lucid 250-page book, Eagleton, who has little patience for most of the theories he elucidates, untangles and, most importantly, demystifies phenomenology, hermeneutics, structuralism, semiotics, and the like. If Eagleton does not suffice, I suggest they transfer to Yale, a bastion of theoretical praxis that should cure all but the most intractable.

TIMOTHY W. RYBACK
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Toward the beginning of his article, Joseph Epstein writes that, ". . . what they [the great novelists] wrote contained as high a truth quotient as I was likely to get from any other kind of writing," a statement with which I fully concur. . . .

For example, though several superb biographies and histories have laid out the facts of Stalin's extraordinary iniquities, none has been able to show us the paranoid, sick, evil genius of the man. Fortunately, two novels I know of have filled this gap, giving us a believable portrait of Stalin: Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle* and Anatoli Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat*. . . .

To take another example, though I have read many news reports, histories, and analyses of the situation in Lebanon, nothing has given me a feel for the horrid, maniacal on-the-ground existence there as two little-known novels, *The House of the Prophets,* by Nicholas Saudray, and David Ignatius's *Agents of Innocence.*

In the same way, despite the plethora of historical literature on late 19th-century industrial poverty, I doubt it can be experienced on a human level unless one has read Dickens's *Hard Times.* Nor, I venture, despite the mounds of contemporary analyses, can one get inside the experience of our present problems of homelessness and poverty without Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London.* . . .

Having adduced this incomplete list to fortify Mr. Epstein's thesis, I am at pains to understand his remark in the concluding paragraph that "Knowledge of the kind conveyed in novels may not, in any conventional sense, be useful." Perhaps when he says in his closing sentence that because the knowledge offered in presumably great novels "feels true," he means that such knowledge provides the inestimable link with raw data without

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which there can be no understanding.

FREDERIC WILE

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joseph Epstein's article demonstrates unintentionally the limitations of being educated by novels. Mr. Epstein's fundamental misconception is that the purpose of novels is to convey truth. In fact, however, their essential purpose is to be beautiful, and any truth conveyed is incidental to that purpose.

Desmond MacCarthy's aphorism, "It is the business of literature to turn facts into ideas," which Mr. Epstein quotes approvingly, involves a similar misconception. It is the business of physics, biology, chemistry, and other sciences, including the scientific study of literature, to turn facts into ideas. It is the business of literature to turn the elements of language—sound and meaning, which include ideas—into beautiful linguistic structures, as it is the business of music to turn sound produced vocally or instrumentally into beautiful sonic structures. . . .

As Mr. Epstein observes, novelists, like journalists, may supply information about the world, or particular corners of it, and may sometimes arouse in us the sense of having been there, wherever "there" may be. But reading a novel about the Normandy invasion, or one set in Rome, is not the same as being in a landing craft approaching the beach or actually living in Rome for several years. Moreover, one novelist's battle of the Somme is not another's, and vivid scenes have been written by novelists who never experienced what they describe. Tolstoy was born seven years after Napoleon's death, and C.S. Lewis never visited another planet. . . .

A good novel, like a good sonnet, orders patterns of sound and meaning, of things similar and dissimilar, into a unified whole. Perceiving that integrity is the joy of reading a good novel. The capacity for such perception is a human capacity and exercising it is a good, though there are higher goods.

From a novel, a sonata, or a painting, one should expect an intellectually and emotionally satisfying experience, not moral improvement or wisdom.

JOHN MAHER

Michigan City, Indiana

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I found Joseph Epstein's article to be a wide-ranging and stimulating overview of novels, novelists, and literary criticism. Much of what he wrote I agreed with, but what he had to say about Theodore Dreiser reminded me of a cartoon I have hanging in my office.

Mr. Epstein tells us that he "happen[s] to believe that Dreiser is the greatest American novelist," but he never clearly explains his reasons for this extraordinary choice, other than to mention Dreiser's "very real power as a novelist"—a somewhat pedestrian critical insight. Mr. Epstein admits that Dreiser was sympathetic to Communism, anti-Semitism, and Hitlerism. Furthermore, . . . he was "homely and horny and born into a household where superstitious religion and shame ruled." All of this, in Mr. Epstein's opinion, "helped to render [Dreiser] into a writer who probably knew more about desire than any man who ever lived." But even granting the dubious validity of the latter judgment, knowledge about desire does not automatically ensure literary greatness.

The cartoon I referred to features

ACCOMMODATIONS THAT LEAVE ROOM FOR EVERYTHING BUT IMPROVEMENT.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

At Park Hyatt® Washington, D.C., spacious suites provide generous amounts of both comfort and luxury. You'll appreciate wonderfully private master bedrooms, where rest and relaxation are assured. Magnificent marble bathrooms. And beautifully appointed living areas that make entertaining, as well as working, a pleasure. A fact that can be attributed not only to sheer size, but to the thoughtful inclusion of two phone lines and a computer port. All of which is designed to make your stay at Park Hyatt an enormous success. For reservations, call toll free 1-800-922-PARK, or 202-789-1234.

PARK HYATT®

Where the exceptional is the rule.℠

PARK HYATT WASHINGTON, D.C. THE WEST END • PARK HYATT SAN FRANCISCO EMBARCADERO CENTER • PARK HYATT CHICAGO MICHIGAN AVENUE • PARK HYATT SANTA MONICA OPENING EARLY 1990 • HYATT CARLTON TOWER LONDON A PARK HYATT HOTEL • THE HYATT HOTEL CANBERRA A PARK HYATT HOTEL • PARK HYATT ON SYDNEY COVE OPENING EARLY 1990

Park Hyatt encompasses hotels managed or operated by two separate companies – Hyatt Hotels Corp. and Hyatt International Corp. © 1989 Hyatt Corp.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the face of a sad-looking mutt. The caption underneath reads: "Lost dog: 3 legs, blind in left eye, missing right ear, tail broken, recently castrated. Answers to the name of Lucky." Mr. Epstein offers as much reason for calling Dreiser America's "greatest novelist" as the cartoonist does for calling the dog "Lucky."

MILTON BIRNBAUM
American International College
Springfield, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joseph Epstein has become one of our most enjoyable essayists. . . . He has accomplished this, in part, by rejecting fashionable ideas and lingo in favor of conclusions that arise out of his own experience and that are couched in the language of plain talk and common sense. . . . His essays are engagingly given to personal references and he writes as one who would rather seem crude than a show-off. In his breathtakingly ungenerous attack on Wayne C. Booth's great book, however, Mr. Epstein has exposed the defects of his virtues.

Booth's *The Company We Keep* is the rich harvest of a lifetime of thinking about the nature of fiction and the way we learn from it, full of wisdom that applies also to our "reading" of life, and brilliantly lucid amid many complexities. In the presence of these complexities, Mr. Epstein's plain-man's stance has betrayed him into simple-mindedness, and his hostility to fashionable intellectual attitudes—and most of all to the newly current clichés of sentimental liberalism—has led him to his own "knee-jerk" political response. He sees red at Booth's willingness to learn something from protesting black and feminist critics, apparently unaware that the book is continually reintroducing such people to the real world their ideology shuts out. . . .

To see how Mr. Epstein has gone embarrassingly astray, the reader has only to look back at the paragraphs he quotes as examples of Booth's supposed "vanity notes" and "self-congratulation." Booth's footnote reference to an article of his own on the subject he is discussing is obviously an instance of the freedom he feels to share relevant personal experience. . . . Mr. Epstein, however, can dwell only on the self-reference—as if the author of *The Rhetoric of Fiction* and other distinguished books needs to brag about an old article!

Then, in a really amazing example of stretching to make his point, Mr. Epstein tells us that in writing . . . about how great novelists can help us grow "more profound, . . . sensitive, . . . generous," Booth is really boasting about how wise he himself has become. . . .

Mr. Epstein quotes a paragraph from an essay by Robert Louis Stevenson and then chides Booth for writing about books in terms a little less simple and familiar than Stevenson's. But . . . Booth is not writing a chatty essay for the general public. He is addressing . . . professors, professional critics, and students of literature and interested bystanders, and he is trying to argue down the boring and pretentious theories which are now the rage in academe, and to replace them with a way of looking at fiction that will use and illuminate our actual experience instead of treating it as irrelevant private fantasy. This is not a job that can be done in a chatty essay.

And yet for those who *are* interested in the subject, Booth's long book is not only a pleasure to read, but a page-turner right to the end. . . . Like Joseph Epstein himself, though with the vastly greater subtlety, complexity, and erudition his subject requires, . . . Booth speaks in his own person—as a husband, father, teacher, and lover of good stories—and expresses himself in a style that, in spite of all that subtlety, is always clear, swift, lively, and free of every sort of affectation, even that of the *very* plain man.

IRVIN STOCK
Brookline, Massachusetts

JOSEPH EPSTEIN writes:

Irvin Stock and I simply disagree about the quality of Wayne C. Booth's book. He thinks it, in his word, "great." I think it an extreme instance of teacher's disease set out on paper. The symptoms of this disease are garrulity and repetitiousness combined with condescension and gravely misplaced confidence in one's own wittiness. No cure for this disease is known.

The Pollard Case

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

When I read Eliot A. Cohen's review of Wolf Blitzer's book, *Territory of Lies*, it sounded familiar [Books in Review, August]. The review contained character-damaging statements and many of the clichés distributed in a form letter by the U.S. Navy and Justice Departments in response to inquiries from concerned U.S. citizens. This was clarified when I learned that Mr. Cohen is actually an employee of the U.S. Navy. How could COMMENTARY condone such an apparent conflict of interest?

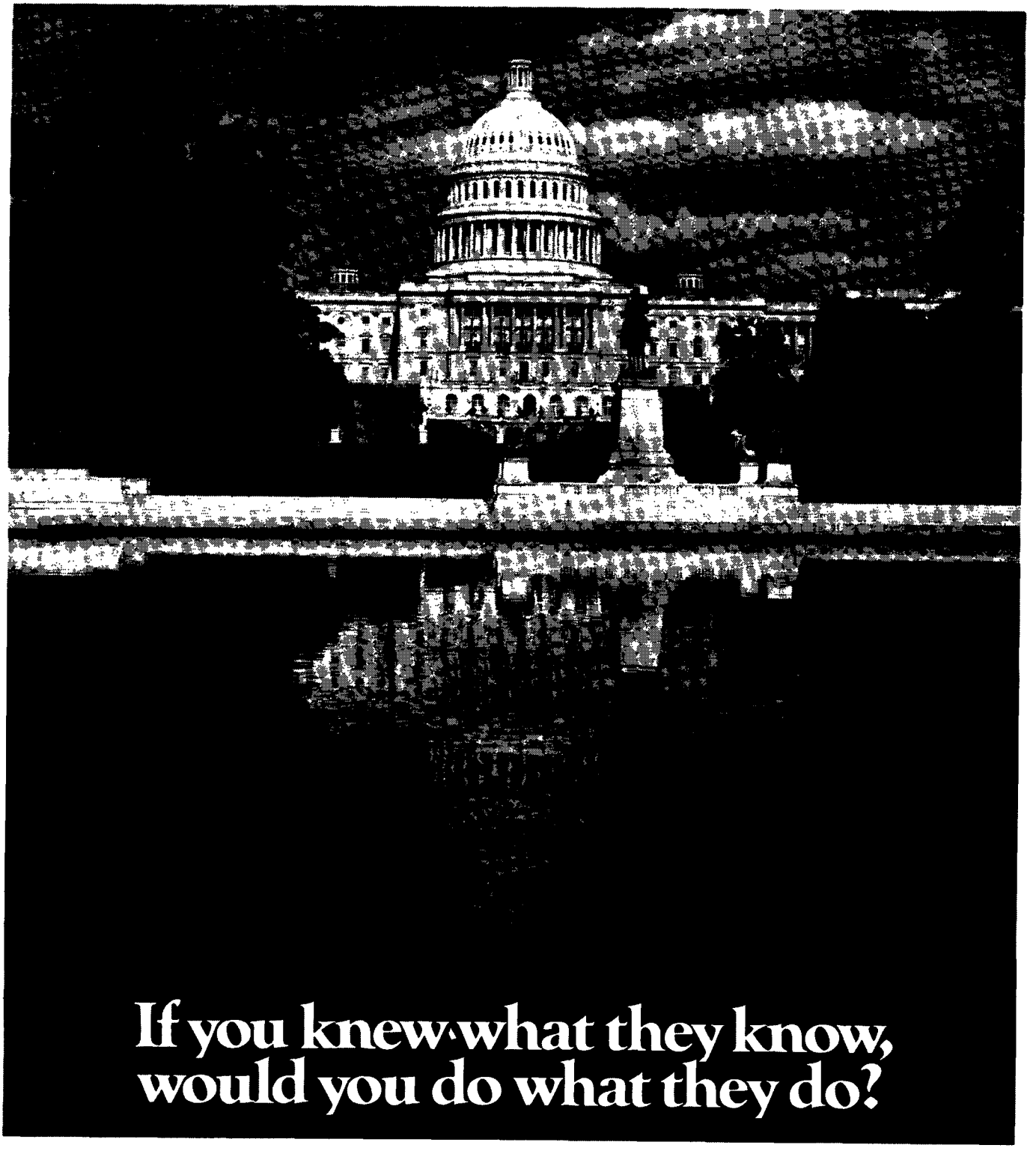
Blitzer's book, based on two interviews with my son, Jonathan Pollard, is well-written; but it minimizes or omits some significant facts that are based on documented evidence:

- Why did Jonathan Pollard's records disappear from the files of psychiatrist Neil Pauker?
- Why did the Grand Jury refuse to indict him on *intent* to damage the security of the U.S.? There was no evidence of intent.
- Why were the nine months of polygraph examinations disregarded? Three facts were thereby established: (1) that Jonathan was a Zionist ideologue; (2) that he was not a mercenary; and (3) that he harbored no anti-U.S. sentiments.
- Why did Caspar Weinberger poison the atmosphere through publicized statements to the effect that Jonathan made Israel too strong, and that he should be hanged? Weinberger uttered not a word about others like John Walker, Jr., Ronald Pelton, Jerry Whitworth, Edward Lee Howard, or Clayton Lonetree.
- Why was Jonathan held for ten-and-one-half months in a ward for the criminally insane? A letter dated February 15, 1989 from the Director of Prisons, Michael Quinlan, states: "Mr. Pollard was never classified or managed as a psychiatric patient."
- Who determined the fantastic physical volume of data that was transmitted to Israel? That information was based on speculation, not on fact.

Wolf Blitzer suggests that he was "used" by the Navy to compromise Jonathan. His second interview with Jonathan was the basis for the extreme sentence. While that interview was authorized by the Navy, the censors "passed" the content of that interview, which was then used to condemn him.

Some months ago, I was interviewed by Nicholas Horrock, an editor of the Chicago *Tribune*. Two of his introductory statements

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



If you knew what they know, would you do what they do?

More than any other single force on earth, America's foreign policy will determine what kind of world we and our children live in.

And every one of us can influence that policy. That's what the nonprofit, nonpartisan Foreign Policy Association is all about: working to develop the kind of informed public opinion that will help our government make enlightened, responsible foreign policy decisions.

Last year alone, more than 250,000 Americans across the nation—in discussion groups, classrooms and community centers—participated in our *Great Decisions* program.

The *Great Decisions* book provides objective background on eight key foreign policy issues. Discussions help you form your views; you express them on opinion ballots, which FPA presents to Washington officials.

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION 1918

To find out more, call us now at (212) 764-4050. Or write to Foreign Policy Association, Department A, 729 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019. Donations are tax deductible.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were: Jonathan Pollard was the first American in the 20th century who was sent to jail for assisting an ally; and Anne Pollard was the first spouse of an ally-related spy to be sent to jail. His question was, *why*?

Jonathan Pollard is the recipient of "special" treatment: he has been in solitary status for almost four years, assigned to an insane asylum, held in a level-6 prison in spite of level-3 status, far removed from his family, and forbidden to refute the defamatory statements expressed by Mr. Cohen. A veil of secrecy covers the true facts of the Pollard case; thus, the *in-camera* hearing on this case permits the government the privilege of unbridled rhetoric. It seems to me that the frequent explanations handed out by government spokesmen (for example, Mr. Cohen) suggest a sense of vulnerability on their part.

In actually hiding his true identity, Mr. Cohen in effect is disqualified as an impartial assessor of the Jonathan Pollard case as described in Blitzer's book; and for that matter, any other reference to that case.

MORRIS POLLARD
Notre Dame, Indiana

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Eliot A. Cohen's review of Wolf Blitzer's fictional account of my children, Anne Henderson Pollard and Jonathan Pollard, deserves a response. Mr. Cohen should understand that Wolf Blitzer had no exclusivity with regard to the Pollards or their families at any time; that his book is no more than a clumsy paste-up of newspaper allegations; and that Blitzer had nothing whatsoever to do with the Pollards' sentences.

Blitzer's motivation for his book is not, as Mr. Cohen wrote, "a sense of responsibility," but a sense of personal greed, coupled with a deeply-rooted fear that he, Blitzer, would ever be mistaken for having any sense of loyalty to Israel. . . .

Mr. Cohen's statement that Blitzer's "account, based largely but by no means exclusively on long interviews with Pollard, as well as other principals in the case, goes a long way toward explaining what happened" is ludicrous. Jonathan Pollard's two very short monitored and taped conversations with Blitzer were held to meaningless drivel, since I—and not Jonathan—had previously furnished Blitzer with the substance for his initial stories. That information, taken from court documents, disclosed what the material was all about. That information was also included in my book about the case. . . .

Incidentally, in the year and a half since my book was published (here and in Israel), no person has ever challenged even one sentence as being inaccurate. Blitzer's book, on the other hand, is described as a "work of fiction" by Jonathan Pollard, and "an ocean of lies" by Anne Pollard.

. . . Carefully distancing himself from any horrifying thought about the worth of a supreme sacrifice to save Jewish lives, . . . Blitzer feeds the guilty consciences of Diaspora Jews with self-justification for their cowardice.

When one recalls the groveling of French Diaspora Jews at the time of the Dreyfus affair, the eagerness of Mr. Cohen to echo the untruthful slanders and slurs heaped on the Pollards by modern-day American prosecutors, including Caspar Weinberger, becomes understandable—not tolerable or ethical, but understandable.

Mr. Cohen wastes a great deal of space pontificating about the "stupidity" of Israeli Jews in trying to stop terrorist killings, prepare for gas warfare, learn how to shoot down Soviet-Syrian missiles (armed with gas), and stop a combined assault of Syrian and Iraqi forces on the Golan Heights (all efforts Jonathan Pollard was involved in). His intellectual superiority is derived, of course, from his position on the other side of the globe.

Mr. Cohen explains why he was eager to suck up the false character-assassination stories about the Pollards by writing that he, like Blitzer, when faced with a decision that would save an Israeli life, would "maintain a special affection . . . but not allow it to impinge on [his] responsibilities, compromise [his] integrity, or twist [his] word of honor."

Mr. Cohen is saying he would kiss the corpse with a special affection. But the kiss would not be responsible, honorable, or done with integrity.

BERNARD R. HENDERSON
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Eliot A. Cohen's review of Wolf Blitzer's *Territory of Lies* leaves one with the impression that all withholding of intelligence information on the part of the U.S. in the Pollard case was justified. Mr. Cohen ignores the astonishing position taken in Caspar Weinberger's memorandum that "a stronger Israel upsets the balance of power in the region and therefore makes armed conflict more likely." With this as a guiding principle, we find that the U.S. apparently has been following a policy of providing Israel with enough information to keep it terrified of its neighbors' potential but not enough to do anything about it. In the case of chemical weapons, for example, the report says that "The United States did not want to make such specific information available to Israel, fearing a preemptive strike [against Iraqi and Syrian installations]."

Israel is currently denied access to any and all intelligence relating to the confrontation states of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. A major American theme for the past decade has been that arms sales to these same Arab states do not undermine the strategic balance with Israel. Yet . . . information which might help to ensure maintenance of the balance of power despite the massive U.S.-aided Arab arms build-up is not shared with Israel.

We also know that intelligence has been withheld deliberately in the past when it interfered with U.S. foreign policy. In 1970, for example, when Egypt violated the terms of a U.S.-backed cease-fire agreement, eventually doubling its missile batteries within the proscribed area, the U.S. ridiculed Israeli claims of violations. In point of fact the U.S. had positioned a spy satellite over the area and knew from the first day that the plan had fallen through.

One of the ironies of the Pollard affair is that Jonathan Pollard would not be languishing in an American prison today if he had followed the orders of Rafi Eitan, the Israeli who masterminded the operation. Eitan constantly badgered Pollard to provide information on U.S. spying against Israel, but Pollard refused. I have no doubt that if Pollard had followed Eitan's orders at the time he would long ago have been exchanged for a U.S. spy operating against Israel.

While the damage to U.S. security is a matter of speculation and conjecture, the CIA has without question damaged Israeli intelligence. Blitzer mentions in passing an extremely detailed 1979 CIA re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

School of American Ballet student performance: Merrill Ashley, Gelsey Kirkland and Colleen Neary. Copyright: Martha Swope, 1967.

Thanks to the Library, American dance has taken great leaps forward.

American dance is more popular than ever, and one of the reasons is The New York Public Library's Dance Collection.

Choreographer Eliot Feld says the Library at Lincoln Center is "as vital a workroom as my studio." Agnes de Mille says, "the revival of any work is dependent on access to the Library's Dance Collection."

And they're not the only ones. For dancers and choreographers everywhere, over 37,000 volumes, 250,000 photographs, and an enormous film archive have been essential elements in the renaissance of American dance.

That's just one way The New York Public Library's resources serve us. The Library offers plays and puppet shows for children, programs for the elderly and disabled, extensive foreign language and ethnic collections, and scientific journals vital to the business community.

Again and again, the Library enriches our lives.

The New York Public Library

WHERE THE FUTURE IS AN OPEN BOOK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

port on Israel's intelligence services. This report, which actually gives the names of agents stationed in various countries, "was discovered and circulated by Iranian revolutionaries at the ransacked U.S. embassy in Teheran." Why in the world was it necessary to circulate such a document to embassies—not to mention embassies in the Middle East? This action by the U.S. was certainly more serious than the Pollard affair, but has simply been glossed over.

It is time for those of us in the United States who believe in a strong and free Israel to ask why Israel needed to rely on a Pollard mission to prepare for the next war.

AARON LERNER
Royal Oak, Michigan

ELIOT A. COHEN writes:

Much of what Morris Pollard and Bernard R. Henderson write is directed at Wolf Blitzer, who can defend himself, or at issues which are irrelevant to my review (the conditions of Pollard's imprisonment after sentencing, for example). Some of their remarks are purely *ad hominem*, and thus beside the point.

From 1985 to this past spring I did indeed teach at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island (this summer I took up my current position at the Olin Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard). I agreed to review the Blitzer book when asked to do so by the editors of COMMENTARY. No one in the Navy or any other branch of the government had anything to do with it except for answering some factual questions that I put to them in order to corroborate Blitzer's account. Those who know me know that I speak and write my own mind.

The quantity of material passed by Pollard to the Israelis is an official estimate, based on Pollard's own account of his espionage: the fact that the Israelis had to set up an elaborate weekend photocopying operation in a rented apartment to handle his weekly product is revealing. The precise quantity of stolen material is not known, unfortunately, because the Israelis have refused to reveal to the U.S. government the identity of all of the stolen documents.

Pollard's motives clearly had an ideological tinge, although, as I argued in the review, of a rather bizarre type. The bottom line, however, is that he committed a very serious crime, which did severe damage to the national security. This is not merely the conclusion of Caspar Weinberger (no friend of Israel, I quite agree) but of American officials in whose fairness and objectivity I have full confidence, and is supported by the facts uncovered by Blitzer and others. In this country, thank goodness, it takes considerably more than the say-so of a Cabinet secretary to land someone in jail for espionage.

I am neither surprised nor offended that Messrs. Pollard and Henderson are unhappy with Wolf Blitzer's book on the Pollard affair, and unhappier yet with my review of it. In all likelihood they will have no use for my sympathy, but they have it nonetheless.

Aaron Lerner equates my belief that Pollard was a traitor, and that the Israelis were both wrong and foolish to have used him as a spy, with unequivocal support for American policy toward Israel over the last two decades. That is nonsense. One may disagree with American policy yet think Israeli behavior in the Pollard affair out of bounds on several counts. As I pointed out in my review, the United States does not share all of its intelligence with any ally, even Great Britain. Moreover, the Israelis (for equally valid reasons) do not share all their information or operational knowledge with us. The American and Israeli governments do not always have the same interests, or even view their common interests in the same way. Much of the sharing of knowledge that goes on is governed by agreements hammered out through tough bargaining, at which the Israelis are no novices. There is nothing inappropriate or shocking in this. To think that matters are otherwise is simply naive.

Some specific weaknesses in Mr. Lerner's argument are as follows:

He is not citing Caspar Weinberger's memorandum, but Wolf Blitzer's account of it. It was not, in any event, on the basis of Weinberger's admittedly flawed geopolitics that Pollard was convicted, but on the basis of his espionage.

Mr. Lerner calls Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan "confrontation states." Yet Egypt has been at peace with Israel for a decade, Saudi Arabia has played only an indirect role (albeit at times an important one) in the Arab-Israeli wars since 1949, and Jordan has done its level best to avoid war with Israel for better than twenty years.

In 1970 the Israelis knew in very short order about the Egyptian violations of the truce accord; the United States quietly acknowledged these violations, and began making it up to the Israelis—adequately or not—through increased supplies of military hardware.

It is doubtful that Pollard could have obtained information on American intelligence operations directed against Israel, particularly agents, since such information is very closely held, and a request for it would have been suspicious indeed.

The CIA report captured by the Iranians, to which Mr. Lerner refers (and which has been published by the Iranians), was a relatively low-level (Secret, as opposed to Top Secret or Sensitive Compartmented Information) summary document. Indeed, I have been told by knowledgeable Israeli officials that it revealed a pretty poor understanding of the Israeli intelligence community. In no way was this comparable to the damage done by Pollard in his espionage against the United States.

The grievous flaw in Mr. Lerner's position is its complete lack of perspective. Israel did not "need" a Pollard mission—which is why Israel's civilian espionage agency, the Mossad, which was run by more level-headed people than Rafi Eitan, would probably not have used Pollard. When Pollard began his activities, Israel had seen its peace treaty with Egypt survive several crises, had extricated itself from Lebanon, and was reaping the benefits of the Iran-Iraq war, which kept two potential opponents occupied while reminding outsiders that the Arab-Israeli conflict was not the sole, or even the main, source of tension in the Middle East.

Moreover, the United States, which before 1967 had kept Israel at arm's length, had embarked on wide-ranging strategic cooperation with Israel and was giving it billions of dollars in military and economic aid every year. Israel had, in fact, never been stronger. Then as now, Israel had real and serious long-term security problems, some of which are only dimly appreciated or not understood at all in the United States. Nonetheless, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

kind of "backs-against-the-wall" sentiment evinced by people like Mr. Lerner, and perhaps accepted by Rafi Eitan, was both inappropriate and destructive. It remains so today.

Congress

To the Editor of Commentary:

Terry Eastland's excellent discussion of special prosecutors in the post-Watergate era, "Impeachment by Other Means" [August], has one serious flaw. Contrary to what Mr. Eastland contends, it is not now time "to rethink this particular Watergate reform"—it is time to reexamine the nature and condition of the government itself. Special prosecutors are merely one device by which the most corrupt branch of government is seeking to subject a more popular and responsible branch to its will. Until Congress can be made more representative and more responsible, no diddling with the terms of one particular statute is likely to be worth an extensive public effort.

A House of Representatives with reelection rates of over 90 percent is a contradiction of democracy so blatant that it would be quickly recognized and denounced in any system less venerable than our own. . . .

In terms of the health of our political system, the time is now late. Americans should either revise their theories of government to fit the undemocratic fact of a virtual life-tenure in the House, or they should put an abrupt end to such tenure.

Ivan W. Parkins
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

Public-Opinion Polls

To the Editor of Commentary:

Mitchell Bard, in "Israel: Some Surprising Polls" [August], seems unduly puzzled by the fact that television reports on the *intifida* have not led to losses in support for Israel in public-opinion polls, although at one point he speculates that the "blatantly one-sided coverage of the *intifada* in American media may have backfired somewhat. . . ."

As a former newspaper editor who has made extensive use of the public-opinion poll and found it to be of limited value in detecting opinion swings on issues that are not important to the mass public, I would also question the validity of the polls and especially of their interpretation. The only poll mentioned by Mr. Bard that I have been able to see in its entirety is the one he cites in a footnote, the Roper poll commissioned by the American Jewish Committee. In Table 2 of the Appendix to that report, the emotional impact of the blatantly one-sided media coverage is most emphatically reflected in volunteered comments by respondents, 24 percent of whom are "not sympathetic with either side" and 11 percent of whom are "sympathetic equally with both sides." Now, volunteered comments may be far more revealing of emotional reaction than elicited answers to questions.

But the big question, no doubt far beyond the ability of opinion polls to answer, is the degree of defeatism rampant in the American Jewish community as a reaction to the bias of the mass media. Opinion-poll reports that are interpreted optimistically serve only to add complacency to defeatism within the American Jewish community.

Philip Hochstein
New York City

Mitchell Bard writes:

Philip Hochstein says that I am puzzled by the fact that support for Israel has not eroded. On the contrary, the premise of my article was that American sympathy toward Israel is so strong that it cannot be easily shaken, even by distortions of news and polls.

I have never seen any studies of public opinion by Mr. Hochstein, so I am not sure how he arrived at his conclusion that the poll data I cite are invalid. Although its absolute numbers were inconsistent with those of every other poll, the Roper poll, the only survey Mr. Hochstein mentions, nevertheless still showed support for Israel not to have eroded since the *intifada*. Mr. Hochstein arbitrarily decided that volunteered responses are

The wonders and fun of science... right in your child's hands!

Science kit-of-the-month program fascinates kids 8–14 years old with science learning and science fun!

It's called **THINGS of Science,** and it is specially designed to stimulate your child's interest in science. To simplify sophisticated concepts. And to challenge bright and curious youngsters.

Every month, a new science kit is sent to members with all the safe, simple materials and easy-to-follow instructions they need to conduct as many as 30 interesting and educational experiments. Recent kits have dealt with the principles of magnetism...sea shells...weather...gravity...fossils...seed growth...friction...how to build a sun dial...and many other exciting subjects.

Kids, parents, teachers love it! An ideal gift. Just $3 per monthly kit with annual membership. Satisfaction guaranteed. Begin your child's membership today!

HOW TO ORDER: To start a 12-kit, one-year membership, send your name and address, the name and address of your young "scientist" (we'll also mail a gift card and official membership card), along with your check/money order for $36 to the address below:

THINGS of Science, Dept. 202-T, 1950 Landings Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34231

OFFER VALID ONLY IN U.S.A.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Special Holiday Package from Commentary

The World's Most Thought-full Gift.

Commentary
How the PLO Was Legitimized
Jeane J. Kirkpatrick
Gorbachev's Strategy, and Ours
Edward N. Luttwak
The Curious Case of Chemical Warfare
Michael Ledeen
Demystifying the French Revolution
David Gress
Public Opinion and the Jogger
Richard Brookhiser
Still Taking the Fifth
David Horowitz
A Major Israeli Novel
Alan Mintz
"Lamentation From the Future"
Norman Podhoretz & Critics
Books in Review: Donna Rifkind / Whittle Johnston / David Brock / Thomas Short / George Russell

Send in one of the coupons in this issue of COMMENTARY by December 31, 1989 and take advantage of an exceptional holiday offer:

- You'll get a preferred subscription rate of only $39 for 12 monthly issues–*that's over 13% off the cover price.* Each additional gift is just $33.
- Plus, you can announce your gift in your own personal manner with a distinctive gift card specially designed for the occasion.

So, give an entire year of COMMENTARY to relatives, special friends, colleagues—anyone who, like you, takes the world seriously.

But you must act before the holidays are over. This offer expires December 31, 1989. Just fill out the order form and return it promptly.

Commentary...the provocative, challenging, and enlightening gift that will last all year long.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more revealing than the answers to questions, but these are also virtually impossible to compare over time.

Further evidence for my original point can be found in the most recent poll used to show a diminution of support for Israel. The Washington *Post*/ABC News poll taken after Israel seized Sheik Obeid showed that 53 percent of Americans believed Israel to be an unreliable ally, while only 29 percent called Israel reliable, a drop of 22 points since the previous survey. This result was heavily publicized; however, another finding went unreported. The same poll found that *84 percent* of Americans thought ties with Israel should be kept the same or strengthened, hardly an indication that Americans had turned against Israel.

The *Post* poll was taken immediately after President Bush and Senator Dole criticized Israel and implied that the Jewish state was responsible for Colonel Higgins's execution. A week later, when it became clear that Higgins had probably been killed long before Israel's action, Americans' sympathy toward Israel rebounded. A Penn & Schoen survey, commissioned by the Anti-Defamation League, found that 43 percent of Americans felt Israel was right to have seized Obeid, while 58 percent said responsibility for Higgins's murder rested solely with Hezbollah.

It is unfortunate, but many American Jews seem to have fallen for the Palestinian propaganda line that the *intifada* is eroding support for Israel. Even people who should know better have jumped on negative opinion-poll results and used them as evidence confirming their own insecurity. This is the source of the feeling of defeatism that Mr. Hochstein identifies. Correcting the misperception created by these Chicken Littles does not breed complacency; rather, it ensures confidence in the strength of the U.S.-Israel relationship.

Thought and Deed

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his review of Irving Greenberg's new book, *The Jewish Way: Living the Holidays* [Books in Review, August], David Singer criticizes Greenberg for sidestepping the question of faith. Mr. Singer takes issue with what he calls the book's "implicit message": "Don't worry about faith. Just do, and faith will take care of itself." Mr. Singer states that it will not.

The view of the ancient rabbis, however, was closer to that of Greenberg. The Talmud . . . declares, "By all means let a man engage in the study of the Law and in good deeds, even if not for their own sake, for through the work for a selfish purpose he will arrive at the stage of doing good for its own sake." The important thing is to begin doing. To me it seems perfectly reasonable that the practice and study of Judaism would bring many people to accept the validity of the Jewish faith. Study without doing, however, is sterile.

Take the example of Franz Rosenzweig. In 1913, although widely read in philosophy, history, and the classics, he decided to convert to Christianity. Before converting, however, he chose to attend Yom Kippur services in a small Orthodox synagogue in Berlin. As a result of this experience, he reversed his decision and went on to become an important and influential Jewish theologian. Rosenzweig's act of attending the Orthodox High Holiday services had a profound effect on the development of his faith. Mr. Singer should not be so quick to criticize Greenberg for emphasizing the importance of doing as a means to the eventual attainment of faith.

Sinclair Kossoff
Chicago, Illinois

David Singer writes:

Of course, religious observance can provide an opening to Orthodoxy. In the modern secular context, however, this rarely occurs. Sinclair Kossoff should ask himself why the overwhelming majority of Jews today, who do, after all, keep at least some traditional observances, never move on to Orthodoxy. The answer is clear: they lack the belief structure that would make this move both necessary and possible.

The reason Franz Rosenzweig is a paradigmatic figure for so many Jews is that he, in the midst of modernity, found his way back to religious belief. It was only after Rosenzweig became a believing Jew—and he was certainly not Orthodox—that he became seriously involved in religious observance.

The Forests

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . In the July issue, answering a letter concerning his article "Apocalypse Again" [April], Peter Shaw writes: "Estimates of how much forest there is in the world vary from approximately 2½ million to approximately 6 million hectares." The South American rain forest alone covers an area of 250 million hectares. . . .

Kent Gordis
Geneva, Switzerland

Peter Shaw writes:

Kent Gordis is right: I misplaced a decimal point. Estimates of world forests vary even more than I said: by 3½ *billion* acres.

Correction

In David Gress's article, "Demystifying the French Revolution" [July], the French political figure Jean-Marie Le Pen was misidentified as Robert Le Pen. We regret the error—Ed.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Smarter You Are, The Stronger You Are.

It's a simple fact recognized by nations around the globe: The greater the educational investment, the greater the ability to compete in an increasingly complex world.

But just how great is America's investment compared to the investment other countries make?

Sweden spends more money per person on education.

The Soviet Union's investment in education has created a higher literacy rate.

And Japan's investment in education is producing more scientists and engineers.

Right now, eight nations invest more money per person on education than we do. Their governments know that in global competition, the smarter you are, the stronger you are.

Here in America, the challenge is clear. If our government makes education a main concern, we can once again be a leader in the world economy.

But the commitment is not the government's alone.

As a nation, we must all get involved and make education our top priority.

Get Smart, America. Invest In Education.

nea
national education association

1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/822-7200

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is the West Bank a Vital American Interest?

Daniel Pipes

Analysts of the Arab-Israeli conflict agree on very few issues, but there are two points on which, in 1989, a consensus exists virtually across the mainstream spectrum. First, nearly everyone concurs that the *intifada*, the riots which began in December 1987 on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (henceforth referred to as the territories), has made the status quo far less palatable than it had previously been. Indeed, among Israelis and Arabs alike, there is a new sense of urgency about the future of the territories. Second, there is widespread agreement that the Israelis face a nearly intractable dilemma with regard to the future of those territories. Moderate solutions are becoming less tenable, while extremist positions gain in strength.

These two dilemmas notwithstanding, there is no paucity of attempts to find a way out. Notable plans include Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's proposal for elections in the territories; the Egyptian ten-point plan for such elections; the Palestine Liberation Organization's call for direct PLO-Israel negotiations to establish a new state of Palestine; and the Jaffee Center's scenario of interim steps toward setting up a Palestinian entity.

My intent here is not to subject these schemes to a critical analysis, much less to offer one of my own. Instead, I want to review the role assigned to the U.S. in them. What should Washington do at this difficult moment to forward what it calls the peace process? A close evaluation of American interests points to a rather different approach from the ones currently being tried.

Before turning to the American role, the choices need to be delineated as they appear in the Middle East. For reasons that will soon become apparent, it makes the most sense to see these from the standpoint of the Israeli electorate.

Israel acquired five distinct territories in the course of the Six-Day War in June 1967. One of those, the Sinai Peninsula, is no longer under Israeli control, having been returned fully to Egypt by April 1982 (with the outstanding issue, Taba, finally resolved in early 1989) in exchange for a peace treaty. Should negotiations advance, two other regions, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, will one day pose diplomatic problems, but that prospect is still distant. East Jerusalem has been annexed to Israel and so is a special case that cannot be dealt with at present; nor do the Golan Heights pose any diplomatic questions so long as the Syrian government shows no interest in ending its military conflict with Israel. This leaves the West Bank and Gaza, and especially the former, as the focus of diplomacy.

The Israeli mainstream includes two basic positions toward these territories. One, that of the Likud party, seeks to retain them permanently under Israeli control (even while, in accordance with the Camp David accords of 1979, it would concede autonomy to the residents). The other, that of the Labor party, seeks to return most but not all of these territories to Arab rule (though not to a state run by the PLO). Each of these positions harks back to one of the two main traditions of Zionism, and each enjoys the support of about 40 percent of the Israeli electorate, placing them in essential equilibrium. Such close balance creates a problem in itself, for neither approach has the chance of gaining a full audition. Instead, each negates or complicates the other in a seemingly endless minuet of personnel and policy alterations.

There is another problem, too, and it is far more basic and severe. This is that, in its pure form, neither of the two mainstream approaches is feasible. To begin with Likud: it would achieve its goal either by bringing Arab residents into the Israeli polity or by disenfranchising them. Yet both of these options are fraught with danger for Israel. Were Arabs brought in, their much higher birth rate would cause Israel to lose its Jewish majority and hence its Jewish nature—thereby nullifying the entire Zionist enterprise. Were Arabs permanently disenfranchised, and in general excluded and repressed, the resulting situation would be so morally repugnant to many Israelis that they might well leave the country, while Israel's foreign supporters, including Jews

Daniel Pipes, whose most recent book is *The Long Shadow: Culture and Politics in the Middle East* (Transaction), is director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia and the editor of *Orbis*, its quarterly journal. The present article was commissioned by the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, Jerusalem, as part of a study on territorial questions.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and non-Jews in the U.S., would gradually lose heart.

Labor's goal also suffers from a fundamental problem, namely, the absence of a responsible Arab interlocutor with whom to negotiate the future of the territories and to whom they might be relinquished. The party's long-time favorite, King Hussein of Jordan, played hard-to-get for years, tantalizing Israeli leaders with the prospect of negotiations but never going beyond clandestine meetings with them. Then, in July 1988, Hussein withdrew from the diplomatic game, at least for some time to come, by renouncing his kingdom's claim to the West Bank. As for Arab residents of the territories, they refuse to take responsibility for negotiations with Israel. Instead, they point to the PLO of Yasir Arafat as their spokesman.

The PLO, of course, has become increasingly eager to talk to Israel in recent years, even going so far as to utter the "magic words" (recognition of the Jewish state and renunciation of terrorism against it) demanded by Washington, but it remains unacceptable to most Israelis as a negotiating party. It falls short by virtue of its unwillingness truly and unambiguously to accept Israel's existence; by its long record of duplicity and violence; and most of all by its lack of complete authority over all Palestinian factions, at least several of which are still openly committed to the destruction of Israel.

There is a further problem with the Labor plan, one that does not get much noted at this early stage, but which would probably derail progress down the line: any agreement Israel reached with the Palestinians would in all likelihood be vetoed by the Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, the man who repeats, mantra-like, "There is no peace without Syria." His is no idle boast, for Assad has the power to undo a weak Arab-Israeli agreement; indeed, he has already accomplished this once, causing Israel's May 1983 accord with Lebanon to be abrogated in less than a year.

DESPITE these bleak prospects for diplomatic advancement, or perhaps because of them, each of the two main Israeli parties retains a nearly mystical hope in the workability of its preferred solution. Likud propaganda calls on the old Israeli virtues of resolution and toughness; if only Israel hangs in there, it seems to imply, Arab residents of the territories will become docile or, better yet, will emigrate. In Shamir's words, "something would happen." Without anyone's taking specific steps to effect it, one-and-a-half million individuals in the West Bank and Gaza would either accept a restricted form of local autonomy or leave of their own volition. Never mind that they now overwhelmingly oppose both these courses—somehow they will see the light.

As for Labor, its mysticism lies in the apparent belief that if it can just wait long enough, King Hussein will return to the negotiating table, and this time he will be ready to talk turkey. In arguing this point, Labor tends either to discount King Hussein's public renunciation of claims to the West Bank (and to emphasize instead the signs pointing to a Jordanian intent to reassert that claim);* or it implicitly calls on the great powers to impose a solution. But Moscow and Washington are unlikely to heed Labor's call to impose a Jordanian solution, if only because world opinion has by now so widely accepted the need for an independent Palestinian state. Indeed, if anything is going to be imposed, it is likely to be just such a state.

In short, neither of these Israeli expectations is based on well-founded premises. They represent, instead, the slightly desperate hopes of politicians caught in a predicament not of their own making. At best, they imply an intention to sit tight until circumstances change; at worst, they suggest illusion, not real analysis.

If ideas espoused by the mainstream Israeli parties look hopeless, the proposals of the fringe groups (each making up roughly 10 percent at either end of the political spectrum) fail even more dismally to address current problems. The far Right speaks of removing the Arabs from the territories by structuring the proper set of inducements; benign as this sounds, everyone knows that its proponents would resort to force if those inducements failed to have the intended effect. More than any other scheme, this one would truly jeopardize Israel's existence, for it would vastly increase communal tensions within Israel, spark deep internecine fights within the Israeli polity, lead to a break in relations with Egypt, alienate world Jewry, and cause the loss of American support.

The far Left does little better. It blandly accepts the idea of a Palestinian state, without intelligently thinking through the many dangerous consequences of such a development for Israel. Against all evidence, the Left presumes that Israel and an independent Palestinian state can coexist in peace. It takes seriously Arafat's comparison of Jordan, "Palestine," and Israel to the Benelux countries. No less astonishing, it earnestly works out the provisions by which Palestinians agree to renounce in advance the right to raise an army or to ally with a foreign state. Like Westerners convinced that their own unilateral disarmament would inspire the Soviets to do likewise, the Left in Israel deludes itself into thinking that risk-

* Such signs include: the partial reactivation of Jordanian ministries on the West Bank; the resumption of salaries to West Bank officials; funding of development projects; and media access for Palestinians allied with the Hashemite monarchy. Amman is probably behind the founding in July 1989 of a West Bank party, the Palestine National Union party, which advocates unity between the two banks of the Jordan. Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan has dubbed this intentionally confusing situation "constructive pluralism."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

taking by its own government will tame the enemy.

This is the Israeli predicament, and it is one of nearly total deadlock.

TURNING to American views of the peace process, one is struck by how closely they approximate the four principal Israeli approaches. In the American mainstream, one finds some variant of either the Likud or the Labor position (with many more, even among American conservatives, choosing the latter) while the fringes opt for transfer of population or an independent Palestinian state (again with many more choosing the latter). To take just one prominent example, President George Bush has virtually adopted the Labor position in defining his administration's goals in the Arab-Israeli domain to be "security for Israel, the end of the [Israeli] occupation, and achievement of Palestinian political rights."

What is more, Israeli priorities tend to become American ones. Most strikingly, because the *intifada* created a sense of urgency in Israel that the issue of the territories be resolved, this urgency has been directly felt in Washington.

Now, it is not so surprising that American friends of Israel should echo the positions found in Israel. These are people who—because they may adhere to the Zionist vision, or have relatives living in Israel, or admire the state's democratic and liberal character, or remember the Holocaust, or because, as fundamentalist Christians, they ascribe eschatological importance to Israel's welfare—see Israel not just in terms of potential value to the United States, but as something good and important in itself.

On the other hand, it is exceedingly surprising that Americans hostile to Israel should also echo Israeli positions. In the classic phrase of former Under Secretary of State George Ball, they would "save Israel in spite of herself." Recently, for example, Helena Cobban, a passionate advocate of the PLO and its cause, endorsed Secretary of State James Baker's Middle East policy on the grounds that it "should help put the U.S. relationship with Israel on a more healthy footing. . . . What Israel needs from the U.S. is not to have more policy disputes swept under the carpet. It's in Israel's long-term interest that it receive firm and realistic support, in which U.S. interests are clearly defined and acted upon."

Of course, the phrasing of these comments is hypocritical, even deceptive, for those unfriendly to Israel really would like to do it harm. But they feel inhibited about saying so openly. Instead they adopt Ball's anti-democratic rhetoric (implying that State Department officials are better judges of Israel's interest than its own electorate) as a way of disguising their real goal, which is to override Israel's leaders and impose a solution on them. That solution, of course, is the option at the far Left of the Israeli spectrum, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.*

Ironically, all moderate Americans, even those antagonistic to Israel, implicitly accept the notion that American interests are identical with Israel's. Whether they do so unconsciously or as a way of hiding their ulterior motives, the fact is that they routinely portray events in the Middle East through Israeli eyes.

Reasons for this peculiarity are not hard to find. The absence of a standard Left/Right ideological prism through which to view the Middle East makes the region a subject of unusual political confusion. Also, thanks to the extraordinary interest shown by the American media in Israeli politics, the political debate there inevitably influences the debate here. Then, too, the singular preoccupation with the Arab-Israeli conflict on the part of the media imbues that issue with an emotional charge lacking in most distant confrontations. Willy-nilly, the discourse in seminars at Tel Aviv University foreshadows its counterpart at New York University, and the terms of argument in the halls of the Knesset in Jerusalem are transported to the Congress in Washington. The result is that Americans throughout the political mainstream stake out positions more relevant to the Israeli scene than to the American one.

TRANSPOSING Israeli viewpoints to the United States has the unfortunate effect of inflating some concerns (notably the morality of means used by Israel to quell the *intifada*) while paying too little attention to others (especially the Soviet angle). Even more fundamentally, it distortedly emphasizes the Arab-Israeli conflict out of all proportion to its actual importance to U.S. interests, or to the world at large, while diminishing the significance of a host of other conflicts in the same region. The Iraq-Iran war, for example, received but a small fraction of the attention granted the Lebanon war of 1982. Larger and possibly more consequential civil uprisings in other parts of the world (including Burma and Algeria) have also attracted far less concern than the one taking place in the West Bank and Gaza.

To make matters worse, the four Israeli positions have undesirable implications for the United States. Each of them requires that the U.S. government adopt a stance that is either unfeasible or contrary to American interests.

---

* The far Left in Israel returns the favor by calling on the U.S. government or American Jews to interfere in Israeli politics. For example, Yehuda Amichai, Amos Elon, Amos Oz, and A.B. Yehoshua, four well-known Israeli writers, published a statement in the New York *Times*, "Silence of American Jews Supports Wrong Side" (February 21, 1988), in which they implored American Jews and "all friends of Israel in the United States to speak up" about Israeli policies on the West Bank. More remarkably yet, they argued that "By their own silence, [American Jews] are massively intervening in Israel politics."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thus, if Washington were to accept the Likud policy of permanent Israeli control over the territories, American relations with the Egyptian, Jordanian, and other Arab governments would be poisoned. Nor is Labor's dream of an imposed Jordanian solution realistic. Not only do many American officials tend to sympathize instead with Palestinian nationalism, they worry that incorporation of the West Bank into Jordan would further destabilize that country by increasing the size of its Palestinian majority.

If Washington cannot accept mainstream Israeli positions, the extremist views are even less palatable. On the one hand, no American government could continue normal relations with Israel if the West Bank Arabs were expelled. On the other hand, all American Presidents have opposed the creation of a PLO-led Palestinian state because of the obvious dangers its inevitable revanchism would pose to American friends in the region, Jordan no less than Israel.

These many problems point to the need for a distinctly American approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Not only is this critical for a clear-headed view of United States interests, but, because it departs from Israeli perspectives, it may carry the seeds of insights which could be useful to both Israelis and Arabs. Getting away from the Israeli vantage point and looking at the Middle East through American eyes quickly makes a host of differences apparent. To cite just one instance, while the Jewish nature of the Israeli state is of the profoundest concern to Israelis, it is not one, generally speaking, that Washington need or should address. To the extent that Americans do involve themselves in this issue, it is for religious, ideological, or humanitarian motives—but not out of *raison d'état*.

What then are the specifically American interests in the Arab-Israeli conflict? The best way to determine them is to look at American interests in the Middle East as a whole. These have consistently been reaffirmed by American leaders to include at least four elements: a secure Israel; stability in the moderate Arab states; exclusion of Soviet influence; and the free flow of oil. Translated into policies, these interests have two main goals: keep the Egypt-Israel-U.S. triangle alive, and maintain the Carter Doctrine. The triangle consecrated in March 1979 with the signing of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty on the lawn of the White House is absolutely central to what may be called the western Middle East. Similarly, the designation by President Carter in January 1980 of the Persian Gulf as an area to which the U.S. would commit military force to prevent Soviet domination is critical to the eastern Middle East.

The passage of ten years has not dimmed these commitments in the slightest, in part because Mikhail Gorbachev's "new thinking" has affected Soviet policies less in the Middle East than in any other major region. To be sure, there have been many nods and winks hinting of a new Soviet attitude (particularly toward Syria and Israel), but these are far too ambiguous and contradictory to warrant the scuttling of longstanding American policy guidelines. Further, such steps as Gorbachev has taken in the Middle East are not irreversible; accordingly, the U.S. government needs to be prepared if he falls from power or has a change of heart.

PROPERLY understood, the goals of a secure Israel and of stable moderate Arab states provide the key to developing a distinctly American policy. Working toward these goals in strictly logical fashion leads to unexpected results. It may therefore be useful to provide some background on what it means for one state to be concerned with the security and stability of other states.

Up until the end of the 18th century, when the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of foreign states reigned supreme, it meant concern with external relations only: one state would not pursue a policy toward events taking place wholly within the borders of another state. A ruler could spurn elections, subsidize exports, even suppress minorities, and his neighbors would not say or do a thing. But the French Revolution permanently shattered this comfortable notion; and for two centuries now, a new pair of factors has increasingly come to dominate policy: the existence of nationalist ties, whose intensity often overrides any scruples about noninterference; and the ideology of human rights, which makes certain types of violations everyone's business.

This latter is a particularly American passion, and it causes the U.S. government to be perhaps the most meddlesome and intrusive of all states in the domestic affairs of other countries. That said, however, Americans do distinguish in a fundamental way between non-democratic and democratic states. In a word, they feel far more entitled to pressure the former than the latter. In the case of autocracies, outrage fuels activism. In the case of democracies, the assumption that an elected government will resolve matters on its own, without the need for American involvement, leads to much greater reticence. This assumption is a sound one, for democratic states do have self-corrective mechanisms that usually make their workings no less wise than any plan American experts can offer.

A few examples demonstrate the wide applicability of the distinction. In an effort to win internal reform, Washington feels no compunctions about bearing down on such non-democratic states as South Africa, Chile, Yugoslavia, Cuba, and the USSR. By contrast, it refrains from defining a distinct position on Britain's problems in Northern Ireland. Similarly, the U.S. government had no policy on Quebec separatism when that was a hot issue in Canada, nor did it take

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a stand of its own on the conflict between the Walloons and the Flemish in Belgium, or on the Basques in Spain.

All this has important implications for Israel. To be sure, Israel presents a particularly knotty instance, for while the government is fully democratic within Israel proper, it is only partially so in the territories. Moreover, Israel's behavior in the territories is driven by a complex mix of domestic and foreign-policy considerations. Nevertheless, consistency requires that Washington refrain from formulating policies on such matters as the establishment of Jewish settlements and the Israeli response to the *intifada*—unless American national interests are at stake. This means only one thing: the preservation of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty.

If tensions in the territories threatened to create popular unrest in Egypt, if Palestinian elements attempted sabotage in Egypt, or if Israeli policy toward the *intifada* jeopardized the Camp David agreement, then the U.S. government would be compelled to assume a direct role for itself. But so long as these prospects are remote, Washington should tread very lightly.

So far, they have been remote, and partly because Cairo no longer takes a truly active interest in Arab-Israeli affairs. To the benefit and relief of Egyptians, President Hosni Mubarak has not tried to emulate one of his predecessors, Gamal Abdel Nasser, as a world figure, or his more immediate predecessor, Anwar Sadat, as an American matinee idol. Instead, he has settled in as, in effect, Mayor of Egypt, busying himself with economics, pollution, and the myriad other problems facing his country. For him, the peace process has been useful primarily as a way to facilitate Egypt's reentry into Arab politics. Now that this has been achieved, developments on the ground in the West Bank and Gaza matter less from the Egyptian point of view than does the appearance of action and movement.

This perspective should be kept in mind in assessing Cairo's recent ten-point proposal for furthering elections in the territories. Mubarak has offered his ideas because he needs Israelis and Palestinians to keep negotiating; it hurts him if they are reduced to nothing but violent confrontationists. At the same time, Mubarak's involvement is very thin; he cares less about the specifics of an election plan than about the fact that negotiations are taking place at all. Further, he has relatively little at stake here; the fate of his ten points is not about to jeopardize Egypt's critical relations with the United States and Israel.

The same rule of thumb governing American activism has equally important implications for policy toward the moderate Arab states—Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Persian Gulf emirates. The key, again, lies in the nature of local government. Although many of these states feature certain democratic forms, in the final analysis all of them are autocratic. With the exception of republican Egypt and Tunisia, they are ruled by kings and emirs. In not one of them does the electorate's voice ever extend to choosing the head of state; nor does it ever affect fundamental questions of foreign policy.

The moderate Arab states, therefore, fit under the rubric of those states where Americans have tended to feel entitled to involve themselves in internal affairs. In Morocco, Washington might ask about land reform, and in Tunisia about the treatment of the fundamentalist Muslims. In Egypt, what about the state of Muslim-Coptic relations and the privatization program? In Jordan, what about economic reforms, freedom of the press, the treatment of Palestinians? In Saudi Arabia the questions would be almost without end, concerning everything from women's rights and the treatment of Shi'is to labor unions and summary executions.

The curious thing is that none of these questions figures prominently in U.S. policy. Hence, at times the situation in the Middle East appears topsy-turvy. Every small move by the democratic government of Israel comes under close and often hostile American scrutiny, while even the largest and most harmful actions of the autocratic Arab governments arouse little attention. Yet, as elsewhere in the world, the sensible course would be to assume that a democratic government will find its own way, while autocratic regimes should be pressured to behave in a more acceptable manner.

Turning now to the Soviet factor, we see that today, no less than under Brezhnev, the Soviet presence in the Middle East relies primarily on good relations with three states: Libya, South Yemen, and Syria. Of these, Syria is by far the most important because of its geographic centrality, its deep involvement in the conflict with Israel, and the talents of its leaders, especially President Assad. Were Damascus won away from the Kremlin, the face of Middle East politics would change, as would the Arab-Israeli conflict.

But there is scant prospect of this, for ties between Damascus and Moscow continue to be deep and lasting. Of course there are tensions, arising in part from the fact that Assad is more faithful to the old verities than is Gorbachev. But these tensions, although they have unsettled what for years had been an exemplary working relationship, should not be exaggerated; as with Fidel Castro, the Kremlin has too many interests in common with Assad to drop him on account of differences of opinion, no matter how sensational.

Some observers hold that the route toward breaking the Soviet-Syrian alliance lies in forcing Israel to give up the Golan Heights. They are doubly wrong. Assad, it should be recalled, seeks not just the restitution of Syrian real estate but the destruction of the Jewish state. Nor is Assad's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

anti-Zionism a passing concern: indeed, he has worked consistently since seizing power in 1970 to prevent a resolution of the conflict with Israel. No amount of Soviet pressure is going to change his anti-Zionism, nor is there any reason to think that he can be appeased by Israeli concessions. Accordingly, the U.S. government does not gain by pressing Israel to return the Golan Heights to the current regime in Syria.

Furthermore, the Syrian-Soviet alliance involves much more than the confrontation with Israel. Syria represents Moscow's most important ally in the Middle East, and so serves a host of other functions. It provides key naval facilities, especially in Tartus; it spearheads Soviet sabotage efforts against Turkey; it serves as the fulcrum of the state-sponsored terror network throughout the Middle East; and it pressures the vulnerable oil states into keeping their distance from the United States.

If the Soviet alliance with Syria has little to do with the Arab-Israeli conflict, and even less with the territories, this is obviously even truer of Moscow's relations with Libya and South Yemen. But what about new allies? Might King Hussein or some other leader turn to Moscow out of frustration with the stalemate on the West Bank? Not likely. The conflict with Israel is far from the only determinant of Jordanian policy; a change in orientation would entail too many risks. And the same reasoning applies to the other moderate Arab leaders.

All of which is to say that developments in the territories hardly touch on the degree of Soviet influence in the Middle East, and consequently have little bearing on the American interest in restricting the scope of that influence.

Nor, finally, does the American goal of maintaining the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf have much to do with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although attempts were made in the mid-1970's to argue for a connection between the two, these arguments were proven wrong by subsequent events (notably, the Iraq-Iran war). Today, in an era when oil producers are fighting for customers, this thesis has less validity than ever.

To sum up, then, critical, long-term U.S. interests in the Middle East are only slightly affected by the territories, and from this conclusion three guidelines follow: (1) Assess developments in the territories in light of Egypt-Israel relations. Only if those are threatened should the U.S. government get heavily involved. In effect, the U.S. government should downgrade the importance attached to the territories. (2) The U.S. government should also pay far more attention than at present to internal developments in the moderate Arab states. (3) The U.S. government should stop expecting the Arab-Israeli conflict to play an important role either in the Soviet presence in the area or in the free flow of oil.

Clearly, these guidelines run smack against the tide of majority opinion today, according to which the Arab-Israeli peace process should occupy the center of American attention in the Middle East. Clearly, too, at a time when many government officials are being urged by appeals in the media to take a more activist line, a call for American restraint is highly unlikely to fall on receptive ears. The peace process, to use a favorite government locution, is a train that has left the station. Anyone proposing a different route may find no one to talk to but the porters.

And so plans for special envoys, elections, and international conferences will continue to fill the air. But when the latest round of activism exhausts itself without result, there may well be an opening for alternative views. At that point, those who think that American interests are not served by the current approach will have a better chance of being heard.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Toward a Real Restoration of Civil Rights

Terry Eastland

IN 1989 the Supreme Court ruled in a series of cases involving racial discrimination and civil rights. The cases ran the gamut, involving a variety of different laws and issues. But those drawing the most bitter reaction—"Chipping Away at Civil Rights" was *Time*'s not untypical headline—were a trio involving affirmative action in the sense of racial preference for minorities.

In *Richmond* v. *Croson* the Court held that a city ordinance setting aside 30 percent of public-works funds for construction firms owned by blacks or other minorities violated the Constitution. In *Wards Cove Packing Co.* v. *Atonio* the Court allocated the burden of proof in discrimination cases based on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in such a way as to ease the pressure favoring employment quotas. And in *Martin* v. *Wilks*, the Court ruled that a judicially-approved promotions quota favoring blacks (in this instance they were firefighters in Birmingham, Alabama) might later be challenged by whites who were not a party to the original case or willing participants in its resolution.

In a dissent in *Atonio*, Justice Harry Blackmun summed up what critics generally thought of the Court's work in these three cases: "One wonders whether the majority still believes that race discrimination—or more accurately race discrimination against nonwhites—is a problem in our society, or even remembers that it ever was." Later in the summer Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP, took the gloves off to a degree that Blackmun, as a member of the Court, could not. The Court, Hooks said during his organization's annual meeting, "is more dangerous to the legitimate hopes and aspirations of black people in this nation" than the old segregationist foes of the civil-rights movement. "Racism," he emphasized, "is the most important problem facing black America." In August, civil-rights activists led a silent march of protest in Washington, and now legislation is in the works to "reverse" the Court's decisions. Hooks warns that if the legislation is not adequate, "the only recourse left to us is civil disobedience, on a scale which has never been seen in this country before."

That may or may not be a serious prospect. But the intensity of the reaction and the prospect of new civil-rights legislation ought to be enough to concentrate the mind on what the Court has done. On examination, it turns out that, contrary to what Hooks and his colleagues would have the nation believe, the Court acted properly: the policies and decisions it reviewed did not make sense and fairly begged for judicial correction. Furthermore, as Hooks and his colleagues well understand, the decisions establish important legal doctrine; after *Croson*, *Atonio*, and *Wilks*, racial preferences face a far more difficult future in the federal courts. That prospect angers civil-rights activists, but it is a welcome one for the majority of Americans who believe in equal rights for all regardless of race.

ONE of the interesting features of the commentary on this trio of cases is its generality. One is either for or against civil rights; for or against affirmative action. Yet it remains important to focus on specifics.

On close inspection, the city ordinance of Richmond, Virginia that was struck down in *Croson* could hardly be described as a model of rationality or equity.* Reserving 30 percent of all public-works contracts for businesses owned by citizens who are "Blacks, Spanish-speaking, Orientals, Indians, Eskimos, or Aleuts," the ordinance was styled as "remedial" in purpose. Yet what was being remedied? Presumably, some wrong. Proponents of the ordinance did issue some vague statements about racial discrimination in the construction industry, but the city made no effort to document them. Neither did the city try to discern whether there had been discrimination in the awarding of contracts—or anything else.

What the city did have were some statistics—the driving force of so many quota schemes. According to its purchasing director, from 1978 to 1983 only two-thirds of 1 percent of construc-

TERRY EASTLAND, who served in the Department of Justice from 1983 to 1988, is a resident scholar at the National Legal Center for the Public Interest in Washington, D.C. His book, *Ethics, Politics, and the Independent Counsel*, has recently been published by the Center.

* For a fuller discussion of the case, see my "Racial Preference in Court (Again)," COMMENTARY, January 1989.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion contracts let by Richmond had been awarded to minority-owned businesses. This, in a city whose nonwhite population exceeds 50 percent. But Richmond did not even attempt to prove that the discrepancy between the two percentages resulted from racial discrimination. Hence the city demonstrated nothing in a moral sense that it was "remedying."

Furthermore, a racial set-aside was the only kind of "remedy" for this undemonstrated wrong that the city ever contemplated. Richmond did not consider reviewing its bidding practices to make sure that they were intelligible and accessible to all. Or devising special advertising and outreach programs to encourage minority contractors to apply. Or establishing financing programs designed to help firms unable to post bonds or to borrow money for reasons unrelated to their credit rating. No, *as a first resort*, the city simply decided to parcel out 30 percent of its public-works contracts to businesses owned by members of certain minority groups. Remarkably, given the lesson of contemporary history that racial distinctions made by government divide and embitter a polity, Richmond did not ponder the impact of a racial set-aside on those of the "wrong" race.

As for the 30-percent figure, it seemed arbitrary. Why not 20 or 40 percent? And the choice of which minority groups to protect defied reason. Obviously, the city was trying to benefit blacks, who comprise 51.3 percent of Richmond's population, according to the 1980 census. But why also Spanish-speaking, Orientals, Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts? They make up only 1.82 percent of the city's population, with the total number of Eskimos being three, and Aleuts just two. And because the ordinance did not limit the prospective beneficiaries to only those minority contractors with Richmond or Richmond-area addresses, anyone anywhere with the right racial credential could apply for a set-aside. But why should a black contractor, especially one whose family has lived for generations in Richmond, have to compete for set-aside funds with one of the two Aleuts living in Richmond? Or with one still domiciled in Alaska? Or—the more likely scenario—with a successful Hispanic entrepreneur from Los Angeles?

One could try, as Richmond did, to defend its set-aside as following a federal model upheld by the Supreme Court. In 1977 Congress enacted a statute that set aside 10 percent of certain federal construction grants for minority contractors. In 1980, in *Fullilove* v. *Klutznick*, the Court upheld the law against constitutional challenge. The Richmond ordinance was the same as the federal law in certain respects. For example, both reserved contracts for the same minority groups. But there were also important differences. For one, the federal set-aside was predicated on a congressional finding of discrimination. For another, the law required minority businesses to demonstrate administratively that they had been excluded from contracting opportunities. Indeed, in *Fullilove*, Chief Justice Burger hinted that the law might be invalid if contracts were awarded on the basis of race, rather than on the basis of demonstrated discrimination. All in all, the Richmond set-aside was not as rationally or equitably conceived as the federal law (which long ago expired).

Fullilove was not the only constitutional case of relevance in *Croson*. More relevant, in fact, was *Wygant* v. *Jackson Board of Education*, a 1986 ruling in which the Court struck down a school board's racial quota requiring that the percentage of black teachers not decrease in the event of a layoff. The Court rejected the rationale for the policy, which included the idea of redressing "societal discrimination." *Wygant* made it much more difficult for public entities to adopt racial preferences. It also meant that the Richmond ordinance was doomed. *Wygant*, wrote Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in her opinion for the Court in *Croson*, requires that Richmond have what it manifestly did not have—a "strong basis in evidence for its conclusion that remedial action was necessary."

That is a sensible requirement, and *Croson* is an important corrective to the kind of wholesale thoughtlessness with which racial preferences otherwise would be fashioned and imposed by states and localities. Indeed, it is a corrective to past practices. For Richmond was no isolated case. In a brief in the case, some 36 states and 190 local governments claimed to have adopted similar set-asides. All believed their programs were fully constitutional. Now many of them have had to go back to the drawing board. Or, to be more precise, they have had to put on their thinking caps. And not only must states and localities produce clear findings of actual discrimination (as opposed to statistics showing "societal discrimination"). When they start to think about a remedy, they must first try race-neutral measures (such as those Richmond neglected even to consider). And if those fail, and they resort to a racial preference, they must show that it is used wherever possible to help actual victims of discrimination and does the least injury possible to innocent third parties, that is, people of the "wrong" race.

Croson directs states and localities to think hard and long about the demands of fairness. That makes moral sense, especially in situations, as in Richmond, where minorities control the governing body. And it makes practical sense in a nation open to immigrants the world over.

THE question in *Atonio* involved the Civil Rights Act of 1964, specifically Title VII, which prohibits employment discrimination against any individual on the basis of race. In 1971 the Supreme Court in *Griggs* v. *Duke Power Co.* held that Title VII proscribes not only "overt discrimination" but also employment prac-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tices "that are fair in form but discriminatory in practice"—such as height and weight requirements. While a Title VII case charging overt discrimination—a so-called disparate-treatment case—requires evidence of the employer's subjective intent to discriminate, a Title VII case challenging the "disparate impact" of employment practices that are neutral on their face does not.

Since *Griggs*, "disparate-impact" cases have become the preferred form of Title VII litigation because a showing of "disparate impact" is relatively easy to make. It is easy to make because many common employment practices can be shown, by statistics alone, to have a disparate impact upon the racial groups comprising a given workforce. Once this is done, the burden has fallen upon employers to justify their challenged practices as a "business necessity."

In recent years aggressive lawyers have pushed disparate-impact theory to its outer limits, challenging even the most reasonable employment practices simply because the employer has failed to hire the "right" percentage of minorities or women. Examples include public employers who have refused to hire policemen with criminal convictions, mass-transit workers with drug problems, or firemen who lack physical strength. Because some federal courts have agreed with some of these challenges, and because the cost of litigation is often high, employers fearing enormous liability have thrown in the towel rather than attempt to justify the business necessity of the practices in question, which itself can be difficult. Employers have either entered consent decrees requiring quotas or quietly imposed surreptitious quotas of their own to get the "right numbers."

Griggs as pushed and stretched in this way has led to the very result that congressional sponsors of the 1964 Civil Rights Act explicitly ruled out. As the floor leader in the Senate, Hubert Humphrey, declared (in a comment echoed over and over by supporters of the bill in both houses of Congress):

> The title [Title VII] does not provide that any preferential treatment in employment shall be given to Negroes or to any other persons or groups. It does not provide that any quota systems may be established to maintain racial balance in employment. In fact, the title would prohibit preferential treatment for any particular group. . . .

Some day, some Supreme Court had to correct the reinterpretation via *Griggs* of a statute that had departed so far from its original, and morally superior, meaning.* This was the altogether reasonable action the Court took in *Atonio*. Moreover, in this case the Court was confronted with a truly bizarre statistical claim.

In *Atonio*, a group of nonwhite cannery workers—Filipinos and Alaska natives—sued their employers, two companies operating salmon canneries in Alaska. They focused on the fact that they held a majority of the "unskilled cannery jobs," while whites held a majority of the better-paying, skilled cannery positions, and they charged that their employers' hiring practices were responsible for the racial disparity. The cannery workers lost in the district court, but not in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, which relied *exclusively* on a statistical comparison, by race, of the workers in the two job categories in order to hold that there was indeed a *prima-facie* case of disparate impact.

In reversing the Ninth Circuit, the Supreme Court observed that the proper comparison was "between the racial composition of the *qualified* persons in the labor market and the persons holding at-issue jobs" (emphasis added). Moreover, the Court said, statistics alone are not enough to sustain a *prima-facie* case of disparate impact. Those charging discrimination must also isolate and identify the specific employment practices causing the disparity.

Finally, the Court shifted the burden of proof in a plainly rational way. Now the employer must still present a business justification for the practice said to have caused the disparity, but ultimate proof of discrimination is the plaintiff's job. This ruling is the most criticized feature of *Atonio*, yet here the Court was merely conforming disparate-impact litigation to the usual method for allocating burdens of proof in other Title VII and civil-rights cases, and indeed in all other civil-litigation contexts. This method makes sense; whoever charges anything ought to have to prove it.

It was in *Atonio* that Justice Blackmun remarked that the Court's majority had forgotten whether race discrimination against nonwhites is a problem, or even remembers whether it ever was. This was hyperbole, and then some. The majority merely corrected a judicial doctrine that was threatening to overturn the text on which it was based and forcing employers to adopt numerical quotas to remedy statistical disparities.

IF ANYONE were asked whether a person can be deprived of his legal rights in a proceeding to which he is not a party, the answer would no doubt be: of course not. That is the

* Here is Section 703 (j) of Title VII: "Nothing contained in this subchapter shall be interpreted to require any employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee subject to this subchapter to grant preferential treatment to any individual or to any group because of the race, color, religion, sex, or national origin of such individual or group on account of an imbalance which may exist with respect to the total number or percentage of persons of any race, color, religion, sex, or national origin employed by any employer, referred or classified by any employment agency or labor organization, or admitted to, or employed in, any apprenticeship or other training program, in comparison with the total number of persons of such race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in any community, State, section, or other area, or in the available work force in any community, State, section, or other area."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

general rule followed by the federal courts in all other legal contexts, and the Supreme Court sensibly adhered to it in *Wilks*. Yet the Reverend Joseph Lowery assailed the *Wilks* decision as an attempt "to hide racism under a cloak of legalism."

One plausible explanation for such a statement is that *Martin* v. *Wilks* arose from Birmingham, which Martin Luther King, Jr. once called "a symbol of segregation for the entire South." For Lowery and other veterans of that era, the very thought that in 1989 an all-white party (*Wilks*) could prevail against an all-black party (*Martin*) was too much—indeed, it was racist. Lowery, however, was guilty (at a minimum) of judging by generality. So were a lot of others, whose visions of Bull Connor, his dogs and fire hoses, made it impossible to think clearly about the claims of whites who were teenagers or younger when Birmingham gained its infamous reputation.

Until the 1970's there were virtually no blacks among Birmingham's firefighters. A Title VII complaint brought by Birmingham blacks led in 1981 to a consent decree that requires giving blacks 50 percent of each year's promotions to lieutenant until the fire department mirrors the local labor pool, which is 28-percent black. Because blacks constituted less than 10 percent of all firefighters in 1981, nine times as large a percentage of blacks as whites would have to be—and have been—promoted. Especially notable about the consent decree was its original focus. It was not on compensating actual victims of job discrimination, or training blacks to compete effectively for jobs. Indeed, the back-pay claims of those actually discriminated against were traded instead for a numbers game that has made the usual job qualifications—including scores on day-long written tests—irrelevant.

In 1984 a group of white firefighters sued the city, claiming that they were being denied promotions on racial grounds under a decree to which they were not parties. The district court disallowed the suit on grounds that the arrangement was immune from attack. In effect, the white firefighters had been bound to the decree, but without their consent.

Whatever one thinks about the Birmingham promotion quota, or racial preferences in general, preventing the white firefighters from going into court was not right. It was a denial of basic fairness, and it is for this reason that *Wilks* is at bottom a due-process case. The federal appeals court recognized this and reversed the district court. Upholding that decision, the Supreme Court cited the nation's "deep-rooted historic tradition that everyone should have his own day in court." Writing for the Court, Chief Justice William Rehnquist stated the principle clearly: "A judgment or decree among parties to a lawsuit resolves issues as among them, but it does not conclude the rights of strangers to those proceedings."

How the *Wilks* firefighters will fare on the merits of their case is open to speculation. But not in doubt is the practical import of the Court's decision. Lower federal courts had practiced a kind of affirmative action for Title VII consent decrees by according them special exemption from the general rule applicable in all other contexts. Under the "collateral-attack doctrine" devised by these courts, third parties who were not involved in the litigation, who did not consent to the decree, and whose interests were vitally and adversely affected by the decree's terms still could not "have their day in court"; they were barred from challenging the hiring and promotion quotas imposed in the agreement.

Wilks means the end of the collateral-attack doctrine. It forces the original parties to a consent decree to make sure that all third parties whose interests might be affected are joined in the litigation by the court. This is hardly too much to ask; it is not only fair but is the procedure in cases of every other kind—precisely because, one might add, it *is* fair.

These three decisions describe a Court that does not like ill-considered quotas (*Croson*) or irrational pressure to adopt quotas (*Atonio*) or unfair protections for quotas (*Wilks*). They also describe a Court willing to treat matters involving civil rights equally.

In *Croson* the Court, really for the first time, has said that under the Constitution racial discrimination will be subject to the same high standard of strict scrutiny regardless of the form it takes. That is, invidious discrimination of the traditional kind (the Bull Connor kind) and so-called benign discrimination of the Richmond set-aside kind stand before the Court on the same step. In *Atonio*, the Court has made sure that disparate-impact litigation proceeds according to the same rules as other civil-rights litigation. And in *Wilks* the Court has guaranteed that consent decrees containing racial preferences do not have shelter unavailable to other kinds of decrees. In all three cases, the Court has declined to indulge special treatment for racial preferences. In all three cases, the Court has insisted on equal treatment.

This is not to say that the Court has completely shut the door on racial preferences that benefit individuals who are not victims of identifiable discrimination. Justice Antonin Scalia would like the Court to shut that door, as his concurrence in *Croson* indicates. But that is not the Court's position, not yet. Nevertheless, the Court's position is tough on racial preferences, as indeed it should be. Only in the most limited circumstances are they permissible. Thus, a private employer may voluntarily adopt a preference to break through a barrier of wholesale racial exclusion in certain jobs. But he may not do that to maintain

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"racial balance." Federal courts may order racial preferences, but only to remedy longstanding discrimination that has obstinately failed to subside despite other remedial efforts—only, in other words, as a last resort, and only then if "narrowly tailored" so that the rights of innocent third parties suffer the least damage. And a public employer or a locality like Richmond may adopt a preference, but again only if it has a firm basis for doing so, and only if it does so as a last resort, and only if the preference is "narrowly tailored."

Critics of these decisions accuse the Court, as Justice Stevens did in his dissent in *Wilks*, of "judicial activism." Judicial activism is an imprecise term the meaning of which often depends on whose ox is being gored. But it is the reverse of judicial activism for the Supreme Court to call a halt to practices that clearly stray from correct legal principles, which is precisely what the Court was doing in *Croson*, *Atonio*, and *Wilks*. Indeed, the appropriate term for the Court's work in those cases is judicial humility. In the civil-rights area, as in others, the Court is demonstrating that it, too, is under the Constitution and willing to interpret and apply the laws as they were written.

Civil-rights activists like Benjamin Hooks understand this very well, even if they dare not say so. The plain fact is, the Court is no longer "theirs." (Neither, for that matter, is the federal judiciary.) The fight they waged over the Bork nomination has proved a Pyrrhic victory. Justice Anthony Kennedy, who eventually replaced Justice Lewis Powell, has been constant in his disapproval of racial preferences, where Powell was not. And meanwhile, Justice O'Connor, who has succeeded Powell as the pivotal Justice in cases involving racial preferences, seems less likely to approve their use than Powell was.

This is why the battle over quotas is now beginning to move out of the Court and into the Congress. Among the legislative "responses" to the Court's latest decisions is one introduced by Senator Paul Simon (D.-Illinois) that would permit states and localities to enact "minority setasides." And more than one bill has been drafted to overturn *Atonio*. None of these bills declares its real purpose—the resurrection of racial quotas. The anti-*Atonio* legislation, for example, seeks to eliminate the Court's requirement that plaintiffs demonstrate which employment practice has contributed to a disparate impact, and also to shift back to the employer the burden of proving that a challenged employment practice constitutes a business necessity. In other words, it would revive the means by which racial quotas have been established in the past.

Not only do these bills fail to indicate their real purpose, they are being advertised as something different. One of the bills, for example, is called the Civil Rights Restoration Act. Who could quarrel with that? Here the strategy is to disguise the real issues: equality of results versus equality of opportunity, discrimination versus nondiscrimination.

It is a tragedy of enormous proportion that so many well-intentioned Americans have for so long invested so much time and energy in the pursuit and advocacy of racial preferences. The early defense of preferences as a temporary phenomenon, reserved for the most difficult circumstance, is seldom heard any longer. Instead, preferences have become an end in themselves, the effective equivalent, for many, of civil rights. As such they have distorted and damaged the original meaning of civil rights and led to cynicism about racial justice.

At a practical level, quotas in Birmingham and elsewhere have proved to be a shortcut—but to where? Not to the kind of social and economic advancement on terms by which individuals of all races can accept each other as moral equals. On the contrary: racial preferences have carried us further and further away from the only principle on which a national consensus on race has ever been achieved or can again be achieved—that of equal rights for all, discrimination against none.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What Glasnost Has Destroyed

Leon Aron

SOVIET society is in a state of spiritual turmoil for which there is no precedent in its entire history. A comparison with the Khrushchev years is valid but insufficient: the passion, the bluntness, the consistency, and, most importantly, the depth and the scope of the upheaval under Mikhail Gorbachev go far beyond anything that happened between 1956 and 1964. For the diagnoses being made today no longer center on "individual distortions" and "shortcomings" (no matter how repugnant) but are directed instead at virtually the entire moral universe in which Soviet society functions and from which it derives its legitimacy. Indeed, this assault far exceeds anything said or even thought by those who for decades have been branded by Soviet propaganda as "mad anti-Communists." It is a mood strikingly similar to the one that swept the Russian intelligentsia at the turn of this century: bitter disillusion, anger, radical nihilism, and dense fire aimed at the twin pillars of the *ancien régime*—Orthodoxy and absolutism—and it could well have a revolutionary outcome of its own.

WHAT is "Soviet humanism"? asks one of the most popular Soviet film directors, Eldar Ryazanov, and answers: "Soviet humanism" inspired Pavlik Morozov to inform on his father; "Soviet humanism" sent Soviet prisoners of war from Nazi camps directly to the gulag; "Soviet humanism" locked artists in lunatic asylums or threw them out of the country for "dissidence."

The historian Yuri Afanasiev goes still further. In the pages of the Communist party paper, *Pravda*, itself, he declares: "I do not consider our society socialist, even 'deformed' socialist, [because] these 'deformations' touch upon the very foundations, the political system, the system of the relations of production, and most certainly everything else." His vision of Soviet history is "millions of *zeks*" (political prisoners); "enslaved, robbed, hapless peasants"; the long-suffering Soviet people who undertook a "great revolution" only to be "deceived" and "humiliated," only to be drowned in "sixty years of nihilism, spiritual void, and decay," only to get a "socialism without freedom and without bread and butter."

Yet it is not just the utterly unprecedented scope of these no-holds-barred philippics that sets the current muckraking apart from any similar campaign in the past. Its most original and most dangerous feature is the precision with which the heavy artillery is targeted, and the depth of shell penetration. In Gorbachev's Soviet Union, almost every major legitimizing myth is being shattered.

TAKE, to begin with, the myth of "social protection" (*sotzialnaya zashishennost*). According to this idea, the Soviet state, while occasionally inferior to the capitalist West in the quantity and quality of consumer goods, shields its citizens from the ills of capitalism: hunger, poverty, disease, unemployment, crime, prostitution, and, following the latest Western trends, drugs and homelessness.

The debunking of this myth began early in the *glasnost* era with the simple acknowledgment that all these evils plague Soviet society as well. Then the formerly classified data started to pour forth—even as Soviet spokesmen, including Gorbachev himself, continued to tout "social protection" in front of Western audiences. (He did so with passion, for example, in his interview with NBC before the 1987 Washington summit and repeatedly during the summit.)

Of these formerly "capitalist" evils, the newly disclosed scale and depth of Soviet poverty, food shortages, inadequate medical care, and the housing crisis have been especially shocking. With the official poverty level set at 75 rubles per person per month ($1,413 a year by the official rate of exchange and $90 by the market rate), the Soviet people have been told that 43 million of their compatriots are under the poverty level and fully 40 percent of Soviet families (about 100 million people) live on less than 100 rubles a month. Pensioners are especially hard-pressed: every third urban senior citizen and eight out of ten villagers—over fifteen million people altogether—receive less than 60 rubles a month. (In case the Soviet reader needed help in understanding what living on 60 rubles a month means, the central

LEON ARON, here making his first appearance in COMMENTARY, was born in Moscow in 1954 and emigrated to the United States in 1978. He holds a doctorate in sociology from Columbia University. For the last two and a half years he has been the resident Sovietologist at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, D.C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

government newspaper *Izvestia* published a letter from an unusually affluent pensioner who complained that she and her husband were unable to spend less than 150 rubles a month on food.) The handicapped are worse off still: an invalid woman with a child was reported to be living on 31 rubles and 48 kopecks a month. Contrary to the widespread belief that "in the Soviet Union no one goes hungry," the consumption of meat and dairy products by the Soviet poor has declined by 30 percent since 1970!

But hunger in the Soviet Union results not just from poverty alone. Another, peculiarly Soviet, cause of it is rationing, a detailed description of which has also been supplied. In the Kirov region of the Russian Northwest the ration cards allot 500 grams (slightly over a pound) of cooked sausage per person per month and 400 grams (less than a pound) of butter.

Perhaps the greatest damage to the myth of "social protection" has been done by the gradually revealed enormity of the health-care disaster. A total of 1,200,000 beds are in hospitals with no hot water; every sixth bed is in a hospital with no running water at all; 30 percent of Soviet hospitals do not have indoor toilets. According to Soviet experts, the USSR spends on medical care five times less than the United States: 22 billion rubles as compared with $174.8 billion. (Undoubtedly, the perspicacious Soviet reader was quick to make a calculation based on the real market—10 to 1—and not the ridiculous official rate—1 to 1.57—and found that the Soviet Union spends 79 times less on public health care than the great capitalist demon the United States.)*

The health-care broadside ricocheted into another constituent myth of the "social protection" cluster—the "golden childhood" of Soviet children.† The very same children whom millions of posters all over the Soviet Union proudly declare to be "our future" turn out to be attending schools half of which have no central heating, running water, or sewage systems. Children as young as ten work twelve-hour days harvesting potatoes and cotton on collective farms. In 1986 there were 35,000 labor accidents among working children under fourteen; "hundreds" of schoolchildren die in such accidents every year and "thousands" are crippled.

Not waiting for the Soviet public to recuperate from the disclosure of the infant-mortality rates—five times higher than Japan, 2.5 times higher than the U.S., 50th place in the world after Barbados and the United Arab Emirates—the muckrakers provided supporting details: "poverty" in funding for obstetrics; total absence of ultrasound diagnostic equipment ("Not a single Soviet-made machine in thirty years," wrote the leading Soviet authority on obstetrics and pediatrics, "in the entire era of space exploration!"); unavailability of single-use paper gowns.

The last nail in the coffin of the myth of "golden childhood" was a short poem called "In the Maternity Ward" by the leading Soviet poet, Andrei Voznesensky. Grim even by the decidedly cheerless standards of mythocide, it is about a rat attacking an infant: "We ourselves are rats, blubbering/about things lofty,/. . . We save people on drifting icebergs/ Send projects to Mars/ A rat in a maternity ward/ ate through a baby's cheek."

Finally, prostitution and organized crime—which together with unemployment have for seventy years been identified with capitalism in the official mythology—succumbed to the revisionist onslaught. Fifteen-year-old prostitutes in apartment-bordellos, extortion, hired guns (it costs from 30,000 to 100,000 rubles in today's Soviet Union to have somebody killed), street battles between rival gangs—a *Pravda* article went so far as to call organized crime "a state within a state." Lacking, after decades of enforced silence, a vocabulary in Russian to describe the newly acknowledged vices, Soviet reporters have adapted words from the American scene like *kidnapping* and *raket*, and such concepts as money-laundering (*otmyvanie deneg*) and godfather (*krestniy otetz*).

Nothing binds the rulers and the ruled, Communists and non-Communists alike, so tightly as the tragic, heroic myths of World War II, the Great Patriotic War. For over forty years, the official catechism has been simple and dependable: the Soviet Union, confronted with the prospect of an imminent Nazi invasion and betrayed by the West, which was conniving to deflect Hitler eastward, artfully bought time in 1939 by concluding a nonaggression pact with Germany. The Soviet scheme worked: the Nazi onslaught was postponed by two years, during which time the Soviet state strengthened its defenses, trained the army, and stockpiled materiel. Then, after initial setbacks caused by the surprise timing of the German invasion, the Soviet army vanquished the Nazi barbarians and liberated the world from the "brown plague." What is more, the Soviet Union did it all alone,

* As of today, the Soviet Union reports only 80 AIDS cases and only one acknowledged death from AIDS. But there is a potential here for an immense catastrophe. A country the size of the Soviet Union needs at least a billion disposable syringes a year. The plan for 1988 was 100 million, the actual production—4.5 million. The shortage is so severe that it is a common practice to use the same needle to draw blood from several patients. Often, sterilization procedures are observed imperfectly or ignored altogether. As a result, 3.8 percent of the Soviet population—over ten million people—suffer from hepatitis B, the disease that is transmitted exactly the same way as AIDS.

† A song in the required repertoire of the Soviet grade school contains the stanza: "Our golden childhood/ Grows brighter every day./ Under a lucky star,/ We are born in the motherland."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with virtually no assistance from its allies; it succeeded because of the military genius of its marshals and the skill of its rank-and-file soldiers. (As Yevgeni Yevtushenko declared in his famous poem, "Do the Russians Want War?": "Yes, we know how to fight!")

Every element of this myth is under attack today in mainstream Soviet periodicals. The nonaggression pact has been labeled "one of the most tragic and shameful pages in our history"—no clever maneuver but, as far as the Soviet Union was concerned, a genuine and inexcusable treaty of friendship. A military historian reveals how, in the spirit of this friendship, the Soviets turned over German Communist refugees to the Gestapo. And for the first time in almost fifty years the Soviet people have been reminded of the statement made by Stalin's Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov a week after the signing of the pact: "It is not only senseless but even criminal to wage a war to 'destroy Hitlerism' under the false banner of a struggle for 'democracy.' "

While the very existence of secret protocols contained in the nonaggression pact was officially denied by the Soviet Union until this past August, for over a year the mythslayers had been pointing to actions taken in the wake of the pact which confirmed Western accounts of those protocols—most notably the division of Poland between the Soviet and Nazi occupation forces. As for the adroitness of the "maneuver" itself, it is now said to have allowed Germany to concentrate all its forces in the West, to defeat France, and then to throw against the Soviet Union not only its entire military might but the newly acquired resources of a conquered Europe. Furthermore, the Soviet press has now disclosed that Soviet deliveries of "military-strategic" materials to Germany in accordance with the terms of the nonaggression pact played "a not insignificant role" in strengthening the Nazi military-industrial potential.

Soviet military strategy in World War II is undergoing a thorough critique as well. As if in answer to Yevtushenko, another popular Soviet writer, Viktor Astafiev, who, unlike Yevtushenko, is a World War II veteran, has said: "We did not know how to fight. We ended the war not knowing how to fight. We drowned the enemy in our blood, we buried him under our corpses."

Finally, in perhaps the single most dramatic achievement of *glasnost* to date, the publication of Vasily Grossman's great novel *Life and Fate* has struck at the very foundations of the war mythology by explicitly, and repeatedly, bringing up the parallels between the two savage tyrannies, Hitler's and Stalin's, and by depicting the heroic, betrayed, and martyred Soviet people as being ground between these two giant, bloodstained millstones. Said a shell-shocked participant in a readers' discussion of Grossman's book: "We used to portray the war [as] 'there are Nazis and here are we. Darkness is there, goodness is here.' Grossman changed the proportion, portraying the two systems not only in their collision but also in their eerie historical similarity."

But more than anything else, what sets *glasnost* apart from all previous "thaws" is the willingness, and the ability, of the new iconoclasts to tackle the cluster of myths surrounding the Founding Fathers of the Soviet Union. Within two years, the wave of iconoclasm reached and passed the highest points of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization, to engulf even the previously sacrosanct Lenin himself.

Unlike their counterparts in Khrushchev's time, for the current generation of myth-hunters, brought up on *samizdat* copies of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, the issue is not the "rehabilitation" of the Bolshevik leaders killed by Stalin—Kamenev, Zinoviev, Radek, Bukharin. While welcoming such "rehabilitation," the crusading Soviet scholars and journalists of today are in no hurry to make these old Bolsheviks into new icons. They are asking, instead, "How was Stalinism born, on what soil, and why?" And they are finding complicity in Stalinism on the part of the Founding Fathers, including those who opposed Stalin on this or that point. Thus Soviet readers are already being reminded that Nikolai Bukharin, perhaps the most celebrated "oppositionist," was not just, in Lenin's famous characterization, the "darling of the party" (as he is the darling of revisionist historians in the West like Stephen Cohen). In the 1920's, Bukharin was also one of the most influential members of the dreaded Collegium of the OGPU (the KGB's predecessor); he called executions by firing squads "a method of making Communist humankind out of human material of the capitalist epoch"; and he demanded that the kulaks (the well-to-do peasants) be talked to in the "language of lead"—a demand that Stalin later fulfilled by murdering millions of them.

In general, as one of the most daring of the mythslayers has written:

> It is precisely the old guard that created the political mechanism, the tool for absolute power which Stalin subsequently used for his egotistical purposes. . . . In the final account, it was precisely the old guard . . . that voluntarily and by itself surrendered into Stalin's hands the infinite power created by the revolution. Later, after 1924, it was precisely the old guard with its leftist impatience that urged the country to take leaps which turned into national tragedy.

Like Khrushchev before him, Gorbachev has discovered his own Lenin—this time, a "late," post-civil war and post-Kronstadt Lenin, a "democratic" Lenin, a Lenin of the New Economic Policy (NEP), the foe of the bloated state bureaucracy, the defender of the private entrepreneur and peasant. But unlike Khrushchev, Gorbachev is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unable (unwilling?) to prevent public exploration of alternative images of the great Founding Father. The water is swirling perilously close to Lenin's pedestal and is rising higher and higher every day.

Significantly, neither Gorbachev nor Aleksandr Yakovlev, the Politburo member closest to Gorbachev, has been publicly committed to Lenin's defense—most likely because neither wanted to fight a losing battle. Instead they have let Vadim Medvedev, the Politburo member in charge of ideology, to hold the fort. Yet the myth-hunters, seeing Medvedev for what he is—a hack with no real power—have proceeded to ignore his injunction against breaking the Lenin taboo.

The attack on the shrine commenced with Vasiliy Selunin's masterpiece *Istoki* ("The Sources"), an essay portraying Lenin as the creator of concentration camps, a doctrinaire fanatic whose "education" before 1921 cost millions of lives, untold suffering, and brought the country to the verge of an economic abyss. Four months after the publication of this work, Medvedev reacted by condemning attempts to "trace to Lenin the beginning of the command-and-administer system." But the iconoclasts, having crossed the threshold of the temple, had begun moving inexorably toward the *sanctum sanctorum*—the October Revolution and Leninist morality.

The 1917 Bolshevik coup is beginning to be portrayed precisely as that—a coup. Replacing the glorious "Great October Socialist Revolution" there is now seen to be a gang of conspirators, "taken seriously by very few people," who "did not know how to solve the complicated problems of society but offered instead a set of very simple, primitive, understandable quasi-solutions."

The myth of the October Revolution was dealt another blow by the reprinting, for the first time since 1918, of Maxim Gorky's *Untimely Thoughts*, a classic denunciation of the horrors the Revolution had already then visited upon Russia. Although the passages directly attacking Lenin were censored out, the picture that emerges is one of "thousands, yes, thousands of people—workers and peasants—starving in prisons" and of "violence which is unworthy of democracy."

As the veil of lies is lifted from the crushing of the nascent Russian democratic state by the Bolsheviks, the Constituent Assembly of 1918 is beginning to receive sympathetic coverage as Russia's last hope for a parliamentary democracy. With increasing frequency, the dissolution of the Assembly after one session on January 18, 1918 is cited today as a precedent for a crackdown that could end the current "thaw" as well.

But what is potentially most damaging to the mythology of the Founding Fathers is the attack on the old moral justification of the Bolshevik terror. This justification was supplied by Lenin himself in a passage that generations of Soviet schoolchildren have had to memorize: "Our morality is completely subordinate to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. . . . In the foundation of Communist morality lies the struggle for the strengthening and completion of Communism."

An oblique yet unambiguous repudiation of this doctrine was published recently by the party's main theoretical journal *Kommunist*, which compared Lenin's "class morality" to the murderous "Catechism of the Revolutionary" of the 19th-century Russian terrorist Nechaev ("Everything is moral that expedites the triumph of the revolution"). Going even further, *Kommunist* also declared: "Once everything is evaluated from the point of view of some class, then there is no moral trial and no personal ethical responsibility."

To be sure, there are still limits. When, this past April, in a now-famous TV interview, the theater director Mark Zakharov suggested that Lenin's embalmed body be removed from the mausoleum in Red Square and buried, the director of the State Committee for Television and Radio was fired and the late-night program which aired the interview was "temporarily" taken off the air for "renovation of the sets." Yet despite this rearguard action, the debunking of the Lenin myth will soon reach a double crescendo. First has come the publication in *Oktyabr* of Vasily Grossman's *Forever Flowing*, a loosely-jointed narrative from which Lenin emerges both as a theoretician of totalitarianism and as its first practitioner. As a labor-camp inmate in the book puts it: "Lenin began the business of strangling Russian democracy, Stalin finished it." Then there is *Novy Mir*'s serialization of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, the first chapter of whose second volume lays the creation of concentration camps squarely at Lenin's door.

The vengeful filling-in of the "blank spaces" in Soviet history, combined with the loss or outright denial of any moral justification for what is now revealed to have happened, has produced a predictable result: people now question the legitimacy not just of parts of the Soviet record but of the Soviet regime itself. Incredibly, the rector of the Moscow State Institute of History and Archives now feels safe in stating that the Soviet regime "was brought into being through bloodshed, with the aid of mass murder and crimes against humanity" and that "one must admit Soviet history as a whole is not fit to serve as a legal basis for Soviet power."

The fall of the Founding Fathers may mark the final destination of the Soviet crusaders, beyond which lies a gaping void. Of course, the crusaders themselves are trying to fill the void with new icons, including genuinely religious ones. Thus, in a meeting with Lithuanian intellectuals last August, Aleksandr Yakovlev, the godfather of *glasnost*, several times invoked the term "repentance," while Maya Ganina, a columnist for *Literaturnaya*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gazeta, has called for "kindness and charity for Christ's sake" and the playwright Edvard Rodzinskiy has bemoaned the loss of the Bible, "the greatest book in the world," as a weapon to combat "the deficit of morality and culture." Among political models, the czarist Prime Minister Petr Stolypin (1862-1911) is currently much in vogue for his attempt to free the Russian peasant from the shackles of the commune and make him into a private farmer; the cult of Stolypin is likely to be given a powerful boost when Solzhenitsyn's *August 1914*, of which he is a hero, is published in the Soviet Union. And following Stolypin, it is safe to predict, will be Alexander II, the czar (1855-81) who abolished serfdom and introduced political reforms that set Russia on the road to capitalism and constitutional monarchy.

As for the orthodox, they are fighting desperate rearguard battles to salvage whatever is left of the legitimizing mythology. Their spokesman, the Politburo member Yegor Ligachev, declares that "the facts of unjustified [*sic*] repressions" must not "overshadow the feat of the people who created the powerful socialist state." After all, Ligachev points out, in the 1930's the country became second in the world in overall industrial output, while in the much maligned 1970's "national income" increased four times and "military-strategic parity" was achieved with the U.S.

Yet all such attempts to restock the Soviet pantheon with old gods are likely to fail: once declared naked, idols are even less usable than kings. Of all the much-commented-upon contradictions embedded in Gorbachev's reforms, this is without doubt the deadliest: having set out to create a reformed one-party state socialism "with a human face," Gorbachev has unleashed forces that are methodically destroying the legitimacy of any such future arrangement. No economic reform, no amount of Western good will, even if concretized with massive transfusions of capital and technology, and no brilliant foreign-policy stratagems can hope to fill this spiritual vacuum.

And so the question is: what rough beast, its hour come round at last, slouches toward Moscow to be born?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anti-Semitism and Jewish Identity

Michael A. Meyer

Anti-Semitism in the modern world has been a major influence in shaping Jewish identity. Its effect has been ambiguous, and not clearly predictable in each instance. At times anti-Semitism has served to squeeze Jews back into the externally devalued group from which they were trying to escape, producing mild or severe rejections of self. But it has also had entirely the opposite effect, creating a renewed affirmation of Jewishness.

Among premodern Jews, anti-Semitism rarely led to an attenuation of Jewish identity. It served, rather, to reinforce it. For anti-Semitism was believed to be part of the divine plan which God had determined for Israel. Exiled from the holy land on account of their sins, Jews expected to suffer at the hands of the Gentiles until such time as the messiah would put an end to their travails. The nations of the earth who tormented them were all actors on the stage of that drama, God's agents in dealing with His chosen people. What Gentiles thought of the Jews did not really matter; their views were unable to puncture the firm belief that the Jews continued to be the chosen people, theologically at the very center of world history even as it swirled around them, making them the objects rather than the subjects of historical events. Thus the more Jews were persecuted, the more they clung to their own faith. If necessary, they would die as martyrs in sanctification of God's name.

It was the European Enlightenment which inaugurated the identity crisis for modern Jews, as it drew them to new perspectives from which they began to question the content of their Jewishness. The Enlightenment promise of equality for all humankind extracted the vigor from the belief of the Jews in their own theological centrality. They could no longer see the nations of the earth as simply tools in the hands of God to chastise His people. And if the Gentiles were not mere instruments, then their views mattered. As long as those views bespoke acceptance of the Jews and their integration into society, they did not produce severe identity problems. What might now be required was a greater stress on the universalist foundation of Judaism—this was the requirement which the 18th-century German-Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn sought to satisfy—and the shape that Judaism would assume in the modern world might be a matter of debate. But one could still grow up as a Jew without a sense of shame about one's origins and affiliation.

Yet from the start, acceptance was mingled with rejection, the enticements of Enlightenment balanced by the rebuffs of anti-Semitism. More cruelly, periods of relative tolerance fostered hopes of true equality, weakening particular Jewish identifications, only to be followed by renewed rejection just when the armor of self-assurance had been put aside. Charges to which Jews had earlier been internally invulnerable—exclusiveness or deviant ethnic characteristics—now cut them to the quick. For once they had begun to share in the thinking of non-Jews in matters of science, philosophy, and art, it was not easy for them to declare, "Yet in your prejudice against the Jews you are completely wrong." To varying degrees and in increasing numbers, modern Jews began to agree with the anti-Semites' image of their own group, with mild or severe consequences for their Jewish identity.

The milder consequences have been so widespread that it is possible to speak of them in general terms without reference to specific individuals or events. Most common has been the division into "good Jews" and "bad Jews." The former are those least subject to criticism by Gentiles. They are clean, soft-spoken, assimilated, hardworking, and scrupulously moral. They contribute to society but do not push themselves forward too much. Reading of their accomplishments in the newspapers therefore instills inordinate pride and pleasure. As for the bad Jews, they represent the mirror image and nemesis of the good Jews. There is a need to dissociate oneself from them, since they encourage the anti-Semitism that is bound to strike down the good Jews along with the bad. Hypersensitivity to the actions of the bad Jews is the counterpart of exaggerated satisfaction in the accomplishments of the good.

Michael A. Meyer, professor of Jewish history at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, is the author of *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (Oxford University Press), which recently won a Jewish Book Award. The present essay is adapted from the Stroum Lectures delivered at the University of Washington last April and to be published in the spring by the University of Washington Press.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ANTI-SEMITISM draws scrutiny also to the self. The Jew who feels rebuffed by Gentiles inevitably asks himself: "Was it I who erred by some inappropriate word or act, or was it my Jewishness that gave offense irrespective of what I said or did?" The effect of this uncertainty is recurrent anxiety that taxes emotional equilibrium. This in turn produces a strenuous effort to disguise one's Jewish identity so as to prevent it from becoming a calling card. Only after one's virtue has been established is it safe to reveal that one is Jewish, since one can now be reasonably confident that the anti-Semitic Gentile will acknowledge one as an exception to his rule about Jews.

A few sample strategies will illustrate the point. Perhaps the most common is simply the attempt not to give away Jewish identity too early in a relationship by some stereotypically Jewish word, gesture, or reference. The historian Celia Heller notes that in interwar Poland the Jewish assimilationists

> were so obsessed with Jewish traits as discrediting symbols that discovering the traits became a game in which they tried to outdo one another. Much of the gossip among them revolved around the Jewish signs that reappeared in others in unguarded moments, and around their discovery in people who had been hitherto successful in not revealing them.

Then there are names. Those Jews most concerned with their image in the eyes of non-Jews have changed Cohen and Levy to Corbett and Lane, Abraham and Moses to Albert and Morris. (When the Austrian Prime Minister once asked the Jewish deputy from Galicia, Joseph Bloch, whether Archbishop Theodor Cohen of Olmütz was really a convert, he replied: "Never fear, your Excellency, if he were still a Jew he would no longer be called Cohen.") A similar attempt at disguise is the alteration of prominent physical characteristics that supposedly mark one as Jewish. (Erik Erikson relates the case of a psychiatric Jewish patient whose large nose convinced him "that the only true savior for the Jews would be a plastic surgeon.") A less extreme way of hiding Jewishness is to overcompensate for Gentile prejudice by taking on character traits at the furthest remove from the negative Jewish stereotype: for example, unbridled generosity, immaculate dress, and impeccable manners.

Yet the fear of rejection also has a social effect that tends to strengthen Jewish identity. In the desire to escape the anxiety of being a Jew in the world of Gentiles, Jews have preferred to mix socially with one another. Even as the presence of Gentiles has made Jews ill-at-ease, they have been more comfortable among fellow Jews where they could "let their hair down" and not feel they had to be on their best behavior. This phenomenon is encapsulated in the old anecdote about an East European Jew, dressed in distinguishably Jewish clothing, who enters a train compartment and makes himself at home by putting his feet up on the cushion of the seat opposite his. When a fashionably dressed foreigner enters, the Jew immediately pulls back his dirty shoes and begs the gentleman's pardon. The newcomer then turns to him and says: "Are you traveling home for Passover?" Thereupon the first Jew, recognizing a co-religionist in the stranger, calmly puts his feet back on the seat.

Remarkably, even those modern Jews who gave up official identification with Jews entirely, by converting to Christianity, often associated almost exclusively with fellow converts. In Germany they were referred to as *Taufjuden*, baptized Jews. They had not really become Christians but had taken on a borderline identity in which they still feared the verdict of the Gentile.

In retrospect, Jewish embarrassments of this kind seem to have been especially prevalent at times when anti-Semitism was moderately strong, but not so virulent as to make the attempt at gaining acceptance futile. In present-day America both the lower level of social anti-Semitism and, from the Jewish side, the decreased sensitivity to "what the Gentiles might say" have reduced the anxiety. In fact, one can detect an opposite reaction in the appearance of large and prominently worn Jewish symbols—especially the *magen david* and the *chai* (the Hebrew word for "lives," from the expression "the people of Israel lives"). For many contemporary Jews hiding Jewishness has given way to flaunting it.

IN THE more densely anti-Semitic atmosphere of 19th-century Germany, the hatred of Jews sometimes produced the extreme and pathological phenomenon that has been called Jewish self-hatred. I use the term here in a narrow sense: as a loathing of that in oneself which one deems to be Jewish and wishes to expunge but cannot. It is a form of crying (in the language of Lady Macbeth): "Out, damned spot! Out, I say!" Yet the spot remains and one feels sullied by it. In the psyche of creative individuals this ineradicable awareness of one's somehow filthy Jewishness can result in a structure of ideas so far removed from reality as to allow of no other explanation than pathology.

One prominent case, Karl Marx, was nominally a Christian from the age of six, when his father brought the whole family to the baptismal font. But there were rabbis on both sides of Marx's genealogy, including a grandfather and an uncle. Not only was Marx aware of these origins, he was reminded of them repeatedly by political opponents. In turn, he branded such of his rivals as were Jewish with demeaning epithets like *Jüdchen*, *Jüdel*, or Itzig. (Ironically, the man whom Marx especially liked to brand with such epithets, his socialist rival Ferdinand Lasalle, was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

himself a despiser of fellow Jews: "I do not like the Jews at all," Lasalle told a prospective Christian bride, "I even detest them in general. I see in them nothing but the very much degenerated sons of a great but vanished past. During centuries of slavery, these men have acquired the characteristics of slaves, and that is why I am most unfavorably disposed toward them.")

In his 1844 essay entitled "On the Jewish Question," the young Marx drew his definition of Judaism from the anti-Semitic writer Ludwig Feuerbach. Judaism was not a religion or a peoplehood, but the egoistic desire for gain, the love of money. "What is the worldly basis of Judaism? Practical necessity, selfishness. What is the worldly religion of the Jew? Barter. What is his worldly God? Money." Blinding himself to the existence of a Jewish proletariat that was especially numerous in Eastern Europe, Marx equated the Jew with the bourgeois speculator. But he went further. Even Christians, insofar as they were capitalists, had in essence become Jews: "The practical Jewish spirit has become the practical spirit of the Christian nations." The emancipation from capitalism (for Marx, of course, the bane of modern society) is thus also the emancipation from Judaism.

Another interesting specimen of Jewish self-hatred was Otto Weininger. Though historically far less significant than Marx, Weininger too was an original thinker whose work was widely read by contemporaries and continues to be the subject of academic discussion. Weininger lived out his short life in *fin-de-siècle* Austria, capital of sensuality, seedbed of psychoanalysis, and hotbed of anti-Semitism. He studied philosophy and a variety of sciences at the University of Vienna, where he received his doctorate in 1902. On that same day he converted, as did his father and sisters, to Protestant Christianity. Only a year later, in May 1903, Weininger published *Sex and Character*, a work that made him famous. But only four months after that, he committed suicide—at the age of twenty-three.

In *Sex and Character*, Weininger tells us that Judaism is "neither a race nor a people nor a recognized creed. I think of it as a psychological constitution which is a possibility for all mankind, but which has become actual in the most conspicuous fashion only among the Jews." The Jew is amoral, capable of neither great goodness nor great evil. He is much absorbed in sexual matters, especially matchmaking. He is beguiled by such soulless doctrines as materialism, Darwinsim, and Spinozistic determinism. The only way the individual Jew can overcome these traits is to become a Christian, for Christ is the great exemplar of the Jew who transcended his Jewishness.

Weininger was sufficiently insightful to recognize that he was projecting outward the very qualities that he hated—and feared—in himself. "Whosoever detests the Jewish character," he wrote,

> detests it first of all in himself. That he persecutes it in others is merely his attempt to separate himself in this way from what is Jewish. He strives to sever himself from it by locating it in his fellow creatures, and so for a moment be able to imagine himself free of it. Hatred, like love, is a projected phenomenon: you hate that person who you feel reminds you unpleasantly of yourself.

Like Marx, then, Weininger created a mythical Judaism closely linked to those qualities of character from which he was trying desperately to escape.

But if anti-Semitism could lead to negations of self, whether mild or severe, it could also have the opposite effect. In 18th-century Germany, for example, Moses Mendelssohn at first studiously avoided entering into religious polemics with Gentiles, believing that the enlightened non-Jewish world would accept his Jewishness as a private matter and judge him on his human qualities and talents alone. Yet when the Swiss Pastor Johann Caspar Lavater called on him either to convert to Christianity or to defend his faith, the challenge resulted not in any dissociation from Judaism or his fellow Jews but in a turning point in Mendelssohn's career. He now became a defender of Judaism in the public arena, creating an ideology that justified the persistence of Jewish identity in an enlightened world.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, anti-Semitism in general shored up Jewish identity by creating external barriers to assimilation. So in another way did particular anti-Semitic episodes. One such occurred in 1840, when the Jews of Damascus were accused of ritual murder and stood at risk of mass execution. It was another in a long chain of such accusations, but the first major one in modern times, and it served to reawaken a dormant sense of worldwide Jewish unity and mutual repsonsibility. As far away as the United States, Jews held protest meetings. Two outstanding European Jewish notables, Moses Montefiore of England and Adolphe Crémieux of France, also traveled to the Middle East in a successful attempt to intercede for their fellow Jews.

Even more significant in strengthening Jewish consciousness was the Mortara affair of 1858. When a Jewish child living in Bologna, Italy, who had been secretly baptized by a Christian domestic servant, was abducted to a monastery, Jews were once again aroused to united efforts—this time in vain—to intercede with various authorities. But now there were longer lasting results. The Mortara affair was directly responsible for the formation of two Jewish organizations whose task it would be to protect Jewish rights—the Board of Dele-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gates of American Israelites in the U.S., and the Alliance Israélite Universelle in France.

The Damascus and Mortara affairs, however, did not appear as major setbacks for Jewish emancipation. The former had occurred in the backward Middle East, the latter was only a single incident. It was not until the last decades of the 19th century that dramatic reversals in the status and situation of European Jewry occurred in both East and West.

In Eastern Europe, an outbreak of pogroms and the restrictive May Laws, both of which followed upon the assassination of the relatively liberal Czar Alexander II in 1881, were like a hammer blow that scattered sparks in all directions. Masses emigrated to North America. Usually leaving their traditional religious practice behind, they developed new Jewish identities harmonizable with American democracy. Others remained secure in the shelter of a traditional Judaism, which the brief and limited Enlightenment in Russia had penetrated for only a relative few. Smaller numbers turned away to revolutionary socialism or combined socialism with some degree of Jewish ethnic identity. And a few became Zionists. Thus in Russia new enmity hastened the multiplication of identity-defining Jewish ideologies.

Around the same time in Germany and Austria, the liberal tide of the preceding two decades had reversed itself and German-speaking Jews once again came under pressure. Many for whom Judaism was not sufficiently valued to be worth the sacrifice of a coveted career, or even social exclusion, responded by converting to Christianity (in Vienna the rate was especially high). But others, as alienated from Judaism as the converts, refrained from following the same path simply because they thought it dishonorable. They despised the converts less for having abandoned anything valuable than for giving in to bigotry. Their own essentially contentless Jewish identity became known as *Trotzjudentum*, a Judaism of defiance or spite. It consisted of a stubborn refusal to let anti-Semitism determine their actions.

Indeed, both in the short term and the long, the resurgence of anti-Semitism in Germany in 1880 worked to shore up Jewish identity. Even individuals who were least assertive in their Jewishness were driven to take sides, raising their level of Jewish awareness. Indifferent Jews became, as one writer said, "Jews by the grace of [the anti-Semite Adolf] Stoecker." Remarkably, the anti-Semitism of 1880 even prompted a small Jewish revival. That year, for instance, Jewish banking houses in Berlin took the unprecedented step of sending out a circular informing all their customers that they would be closed on the two days of the New Year and the Day of Atonement.

The longer-term results were more significant. When anti-Semitism persisted, the German Jews in 1893 finally created a national organization whose chief purpose would be defending the Jews against their enemies. The Central Association of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith soon became, and remained until Nazi times, the largest organization of German Jews. While it continued to invest its energies principally in the defense of Jewish rights, the organization increasingly fostered both Jewish pride and a broader and deeper Jewish identity. And while it became the sworn enemy of the Zionists, it persistently condemned apostasy and preached the open acknowledgment of Jewishness before Gentiles. One Association lecturer was able to picture the work of defense not only as heroic, but also as linked, however tenuously, to the Jewish past. "Just as our ancestors went boldly and undaunted into exile and death on account of their religion," he maintained, "so let it be said of us some day that we fought fearlessly and tenaciously for our rights." For many religiously indifferent Jews—in Germany, Austria, the United States, and elsewhere—defending their right to be treated equally while remaining in some, even minor, sense different from Gentiles became their way of being Jewish.

In Germany the ambiguous impact of anti-Semitism on Jewish identity came to an end during the 1930's. Nazism differed from previous anti-Semitisms in closing off the escape route of greater assimilation or even conversion. Since the Nazi criteria for Jewishness were essentially racial, converts to Christianity of Jewish parentage were subjected to the same treatment as the most Orthodox Jews. The state now forced Jewish identity on those whom it defined as Jews regardless of their own feelings. No matter what they did—unless they could manage to leave Germany or chose to commit suicide—German Jews were unable to remove themselves from the reference group to which they were assigned. Even the disguise of a Gentile name was blocked when the Nazis insisted that every male Jew add the name "Israel," every female the name "Sarah." Few were the instances of individuals who could maintain a subjective consciousness of being no longer, or only minimally, Jewish despite the objective mark placed on all members of the Jewish "race." The more common response was to look inward at a Jewish interior landscape that had long ago grown barren.

Nazi anti-Semitism before the Holocaust thus had the general effect of restoring Jewish consciousness where it had eroded severely. The most assimilated of German Jews, often for the first time in their lives, now felt the need to confront and to reaffirm their Jewishness. At the age of twenty-four, the Nobel-prize-winning Jewish chemist Fritz Haber had converted to Protestantism for the sake of his career. As the head of an important scientific institute, he became an influential figure, especially after he succeeded in developing poison gas for the German army in World War I. But as a racial Jew, Haber was forced

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

into resigning his position in 1933. Nazism remade Haber into a Jew in spite of himself. To Albert Einstein he wrote: "In my whole life I have never been so Jewish as now."

Max Liebermann, the most important German-Jewish painter, had never converted to Christianity. Nor had he hidden his Jewishness. He had even devoted some of his *oeuvre* to Jewish themes. But Liebermann was foremost a German and a decided opponent of Jewish nationalism. In the early 1920's the Hebrew poet Hayyim Nahman Bialik had sat for a portrait in Liebermann's studio in Berlin, all the while seeking to persuade the artist of the virtues of Zionism. Not surprisingly, Bialik's efforts were of no avail. Liebermann believed that the Jewish question had already been solved. But then, a little over a decade later and just after Hitler had come to power early in 1933, there was a fresh contact between the two men. The aged Liebermann wrote to Bialik, then in Palestine, in order to thank him and Meir Dizengoff, two of the curators of the Tel Aviv museum, for that body's decision to name a room in his honor. After expressing his joy at the tribute, Liebermann continued in this little-known letter:

> In these difficult times the feeling of solidarity with my Jewish co-religionists is doubly gratifying and comforting in view of the deprivation of rights with which German Jews are now forced to live. Like a horrible nightmare the abrogation of equal rights weighs upon us all, but especially upon those Jews who, like me, had surrendered themselves to the dream of assimilation. You, Herr Bialik, perhaps remember the conversations we had on this subject when I was etching your portrait. Then I sought to explain why I kept my distance from Zionism. Today I think differently. As difficult as it has been for me, I have awakened from the dream that I dreamed my whole life long. Unfortunately, so old a tree—I will be eighty-six years old next month—is beyond transplanting.

Younger German Jews, who likewise had not been Zionists, did go to Palestine in large numbers during the early Hitler years. Those who remained behind tried to fill their externally reimposed Jewish identity with Jewish content. Synagogues that had stood nearly empty during the Weimar period were now packed with Jews who sought them out as refuges from the hostility they encountered in daily life. Prayers long forgotten assumed new meaning as Israel, once again, became a people apart. Jewish education experienced a revival as Jewish children were expelled from the general schools or their lives there were made odious by the harassments of the Hitler Youth. In Berlin and elsewhere Jewish cultural institutions became the focus of widespread interest.

During its most difficult years, in short, German Jewry embarked on a remarkable project to reeducate itself to an ineluctable Jewish identity. Looking back, one writer termed this effort "construction on the eve of destruction."

In France, too, during the brief period between Nazi occupation and deportation, there arose a new sense of the common destiny of the Jewish people, which pushed aside longstanding antagonisms between native French and East European Jews. In Poland, Nazi-imposed ghettoization did not expunge the differences among established Jewish parties of conflicting ideologies. But there as well, external pressure, now in the form of physical segregation, brought those Jews who had strayed the farthest back into the Jewish fold. At least at first, Jewish life in the teeming ghettos was remarkably vibrant.

Of course, whether in Germany, France, or Eastern Europe, the revival of Jewish consciousness was short-lived. The worsening situation soon undermined morale and drove up the rate of suicides. For many the reaffirmation of Jewishness came only on the eve of an unwilled martyrdom. If Nazi anti-Semitism briefly reawakened Jewish identity in some hitherto alienated Jews, it would ultimately snuff it out altogether, along with the lives of those in whom it dwelled. For the victims, inescapable Jewishness turned into an inescapable fate as Jews.

In succeeding years, the recollection of this most extreme instance of anti-Semitism could not easily create a Jewish identity where none had been fostered in childhood. The European social philosopher Jean Améry emerged from Auschwitz with a number on his arm but a Jewishness that was sustained almost exclusively by fear and anger. "No one can become what he cannot find in his memories," Améry wrote after the war. His Jewishness, imposed by anti-Semitism, had resulted in an enduring commitment to endangered fellow Jews. But it could not create a Jewish identity. Again in Améry's own words:

> The environment in which I had lived in the years when one acquires one's self was not Jewish, and this cannot be reversed. But the fruitlessness of the search for my Jewish self by no means stands as a barrier between me and my solidarity with every threatened Jew in this world.

Yet just as, ironically, Nazism had initially given the impulse to a deepened Jewishness, so did the Holocaust eventually become a major factor in sustaining Jewish identity after World War II. Jewish leaders in the United States early called for a revitalized American Jewish community that would be capable of compensating in some measure for the loss of East European Jewry. Later, and in particular following the Eichmann trial of 1961, awareness of the Holocaust increasingly became a major portion of what it meant to be Jewish, especially in the Diaspora.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Few American Jews were survivors in the literal sense. But the notion that every Jew living in the post-Holocaust age was a kind of survivor gained more and more acceptance. Whereas before, American Jewish identity had for most Jews been either a religiously based morality or a loose bond of ethnic solidarity, the rise in awareness of the Holocaust produced in many individuals a much more determined Jewishness. Like Jews in other places—in Western Europe and even in the Soviet Union—the Jews of America were bent on preventing the identity Hitler sought to expunge through physical destruction from succumbing to the subtler pressures of assimilation.

In the United States, a large share (some have argued too large a share) of Jewish activity has been devoted to keeping alive the memory of the Holocaust and fighting contemporary forms of anti-Semitism, whether appearing as persistent discrimination or in the guise of anti-Zionism. Most young Jews know more about the Holocaust than they do about any other period of Jewish history. Courses on the Holocaust in colleges and universities are far more popular than other offerings in Jewish studies. Scores of institutions keep alive the memory of the Holocaust through exhibits, conferences, and educational literature. While American Jews continue to think of themselves, at least nominally, as Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, or Reconstructionist, this religious identity does not, for most of them, possess the same salience as does the possibility of new danger to their existence. It is in large measure the memory and message of the Holocaust that create a basis for Jewish unity in spite of religious diversity. Concern for the future of the Jews as a people seems to run deeper than concern for the future of the Jewish religion.

ANTI-SEMITISM in the contemporary Jewish Diaspora, and especially in the United States, has thus ceased to be ambiguous in its effects. Neither memories of the Holocaust nor the relatively low levels of current discrimination are driving Jews to hide their Jewishness, let alone to apostatize. On the contrary, the ingrained memory of anti-Semitism rising to massive destruction in the Holocaust and the anxiety over its resurgence—these, together with the concern they engender for the security and welfare of the state of Israel, have become for most Diaspora Jews fundamental constituents of their Jewish identity.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Remembering Sidney Hook

Joseph Epstein

Although Sidney Hook, who died this past summer at the age of eighty-six, contributed a number of important articles to the *American Scholar,* the magazine I edit; although we corresponded fairly frequently and would speak by telephone every so often; and although we met on two separate occasions, I am reasonably certain that, had we passed on the street, Sidney would not have recognized me.

One of those two occasions was the evening of October 30, 1982, at a dinner given to honor Sidney on his eightieth birthday. The other was in 1985 at a different dinner, also in New York. On the second of these occasions Sidney made it clear that he could not have remembered our earlier meeting, for as we shook hands he told me that he had expected me to be a fatter man. When I asked why fatter, he said that he found a lot of what I wrote amusing and that in his subconscious he must have thought of amusing people as fat. "You know," he added, "like Falstaff." Something very Sidney about that.

I had seen Sidney in the flesh one earlier time. This was in the winter of 1964, when he was one of four panelists who met under the auspices of Commentary to discuss the subject of "Liberalism and the Negro." It was an event of the kind that I had come to New York in my middle twenties to witness. Owing to the topic under discussion, some of the chief figures in the civil-rights movement of the day were present: the earnest and immensely dignified Roy Wilkins; the burly Whitney Young, looking like a highly cerebral NFL linebacker; the elegant Bayard Rustin. The audience was by invitation only, but there must have been three hundred people in the room. This was the first time I had ever seen the now much-written-about New York intellectuals foregathered. Their presence was not altogether, to put it gently, illusioning. As I looked across the aisle one among them rather delicately crossed a leg to reveal a sock embossed with the figure of Donald Duck. One could work one's way backward from a single detail like that to discover a whole way of life.

When the transcript of "Liberalism and the Negro" appeared in an edited version in Commentary (March 1964) it bore the subtitle, "A Round-Table Discussion." Forgive my pedantry, but it is pertinent here to point out that the actual table at which the discussion took place was not round but rectangular. As the moderator, Norman Podhoretz, the editor of Commentary, sat in the middle of this table, and to his left, sharing a microphone, were the sociologist Nathan Glazer and the economist Gunnar Myrdal; to his right, sharing another microphone, were Sidney Hook and the writer James Baldwin. I was in the audience, on the aisle four or five rows back, next to a handsome woman of very good posture. Luck of the draw, I had one of the best seats in the house, for all the real action took place on my side of the room, where Hook and Baldwin were positioned.

I had seen dust-jacket photographs of Sidney Hook before, but I was impressed, if I may put it so, at how much like himself he looked. In 1964, he was sixty-two years old. He seemed remarkably fit—not athletically but intellectually fit. He was smallish and wiry but solid; no fat on *him.* He dressed neatly but nondescriptly, eschewing the two chief options in academic dress: the bohemian and the Ivy League Anglophile. From his clothes one might have taken him for an insurance salesman or a small-scale manufacturer of gaskets or other appliance parts.

This plainness of dress may have owed something to the puritanism of Sidney's socialist youth and young manhood. In larger part, though, it may have reflected his simple lack of interest in clothes as a medium of style or a form of snobbery. My guess is that he just did not care about life lived at what one might call the Tom Wolfe level of culture. In later years, a photograph of Sidney smiling and wearing a beret would sometimes appear alongside a review of one of his books or an article about him. I disliked this photograph, chiefly because the beret reminded me of the one Groucho Marx wore after he had begun to hoist the yellow flag of senility. Sidney lived longer than Groucho, but as one of his editors I have reason to know that he kept his mental acuity right up to the end.

Joseph Epstein, a frequent contributor to Commentary, is the author of five books of essays, the most recent of which is *Partial Payments* (Norton).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sidney had a strong, crowded face. Notable upon it were an ample nose, glasses, a substantially receded hairline, good-sized ears, and a mustache—above all, a mustache. George Balanchine, in an interview he gave not long before his death, remarked that in the latter half of the 20th century, unlike in his father's generation, beards were not only bad style but, their historical moment having passed, quite fake. I think he would have said something similar about mustaches, but he would surely have excepted Sidney's, which seemed one of the last authentic mustaches around, not an afterthought or a piece of pathetic male vanity but a permanent and prominent and perfectly natural feature. It was part of his dignity, a slight formality of the kind adopted by men of his generation, even rather old-shoe men like Sidney. The name Sidney had something of that same formality. I never heard anyone refer to him as "Sid," or as "Sid Hook." Bertrand Russell addressed him as "Hook," but that was an upper-class English mannerism. He was always "Sidney" to people who knew and admired him, "Sidney Hook"—last name pronounced with a slight snarl—to enemies.

James Baldwin in those days did not go in for fancy dress, either. He had not yet begun to wear the heavy jewelry and flamboyant duds of his later years. That afternoon he wore a plain dark blue suit, a white shirt, and a black knit tie, the effect of which was slightly ministerial. Then there was his extraordinary face—the same face that appeared on the Beacon Press paperback edition of *Notes of a Native Son*, his best book. With its bulging eyes, its wide nose, its somewhat flattened head, it was the face of a black frog. But once Baldwin spoke, you sensed immediately the prince inside. He had the kind of control over his face that only a superior actor can command. He could make a dramatic event out of smoking a cigarette, he could kill with a pause. He was beautifully well spoken, and that afternoon he spoke beautifully well indeed.

In the discussion, each of the panelists began with a talk of ten minutes or so, first Hook, then Baldwin, then Glazer, then Myrdal. Although Glazer, as a working sociologist and the co-author of *Beyond the Melting Pot*, and Myrdal, whose *An American Dilemma* was at that time considered the definitive work on race relations in this country, had wider knowledge of the subject than either Hook or Baldwin, Baldwin did have—no small thing—actual experience: as a black from Harlem, he had been there. Hook had only his principles. As Norman Podhoretz remarked, throwing things open for discussion, "Mr. Hook, while you may not be an expert on race relations, you are most certainly an expert on the principles of liberalism. . . ." Because the proceedings immediately took a moral turn—they were to be almost entirely about principles and ethics—Hook and Baldwin dominated them, with the former pointing out what the ethics of democracy demanded in race relations and the latter insisting that, so long as they were talking about the United States, they were not talking about an ethical society at all.

The transcript of the discussion printed in COMMENTARY, though accurate on all that was said, cannot give a sense of the atmosphere in the room. I, for example, thought Baldwin scored heavily, though less on the points he made than on what I think of as his stage mastery, which did not come across in print. A certain amount of by-play had of course to be excluded from the published version. Hook and Baldwin shared a microphone, as I have mentioned, and on more than one occasion Hook would lean in, grab at the mike, and half-interrupt Baldwin. "Sidney, Sidney," said the woman seated next to me, in a loud stage-prompter's whisper, "Sidney, let him finish, let him speak." She was, I soon realized, Mrs. Hook. At one point, in a question from the audience following the general discussion, there was a terrible moment when the famous black social scientist Kenneth B. Clark accused Hook from the floor of putting Baldwin on the defensive, adding that Hook's only experience of Negroes was probably through his cook. "Oh, I've never had a cook," sputtered Sidney as Clark angrily sat back down.

WELL, no point in attempting to recapitulate that interesting afternoon on East 56th Street except to say that Sidney Hook then struck me as the heavy and the patsy of the proceedings, and that when I read them now I see that he was in reality their hero. Although, as Norman Podhoretz indicated, Sidney probably did not know much about race relations in any particularity, his principles nonetheless stood him in damn fine stead. Of the five people on that panel, it was Sidney who said the best and most penetrating things that afternoon, a few of them, sadly, prophetic.

While allowing that a "temporary" program to aid underclass and other blacks in difficulty would be useful, Sidney added that he "would consider a program which would lower the standards of *achievement* for Negroes as tantamount to regarding them as second-class citizens." He considered it important not to gainsay such progress as had actually been made in race relations and in the condition of blacks in America, and felt that "a good deal of the discussion concerning the Negro problem these days [was] very rhetorical and unnecessarily inflammatory; much of it puts obstacles in the way of progress." He insisted that "the conception of democracy—which, as I keep repeating, is fundamentally an ethical conception—is that we can live peacefully together with *differences*." He chided Baldwin for doing a disservice, in his writings, "to the whole cause of liberalism"; for, while stressing the responsibility

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of white liberals, neglecting to ask about "the responsibility of the Negro intellectual"; and for aiding in the development of a "myth of collective guilt," from which blacks had themselves suffered. "There's a difference between collective guilt for the past and collective responsibility in the present," said Sidney, "for such responsibility can ultimately be brought to each individual's door."

Even grabbing the microphone ("Sidney, Sidney, let him speak"), I now understand, was not the boorish act of an intellectual ruffian but an expression of Sidney's inveterate disgust for and impatience with lies, falsity, people saying the thing that was patently not so. Throughout his life Sidney spent a good deal of time writing letters to newspapers, magazines, individuals, pointing out errors in fact, logic, and principle. To have Sidney pounce upon you could not have been an altogether pleasant experience. "He was not, in our experience at least, a terribly nice man," wrote Martin Peretz, editor-in-chief of the *New Republic*, after Sidney's death. "In recent years he'd periodically send us letters correcting, reproaching, hectoring. We were wrong on this, wrong on that, and often he was right. But he was not only right about small things. He was right on the big things."

Let me jump in quickly to say that, in my experience, Sidney Hook was a terribly nice man. But before enlarging upon that, I should emphasize that it was on what Peretz calls "the big things" that Sidney taught a great many people, myself among them. I first came across him in the pages of *Partisan Review*, COMMENTARY, and *Encounter*, which I began to read at twenty or so, near the close of my formal education. I was more interested in literary than political matters, and had not yet any notion of how the two frequently intertwined to the point of inseparability. Around this time, though, I was also attempting to gain the rudiments of a political education, until now virgin territory for me, a Chicago boy who knew how to bribe a policeman but could not tell you the definition of realpolitik.

In his contributions to these magazines, Sidney invariably wrote on political subjects and he inevitably did so with more authority than any other American intellectual. Others might cite Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, but never with Sidney's certitude. In part, this was owing to his unadorned, no-nonsense prose, with its confident cadences. But in greater part it was owing to the fact that Sidney had pored over, struggled with, and mastered the entire literature of revolution, so that he not only knew it but knew its every interior weakness, in the intimate way a television repairman knows the weakness of last year's diodes.

In 1958, in the pages of the *New Leader*, Sidney took on Bertrand Russell, a philosopher he much admired—he was one of his intellectual heroes—in a debate over the question of whether the West ought to be prepared to enter into war with the Soviet Union even at the risk of extinction, or would do better to disarm unilaterally even at the risk of Communist domination. This was the "Better-Red-than-Dead" question, as it was known at the time. Russell was one of the most lucid and sharpest minds of the century, and everywhere conceded to be one of the toughest opponents in argument. He once debated Mortimer J. Adler at the University of Chicago on the subject of education, and it was said that Adler might have won but the victory wasn't worth it. "One cannot but admire the rough-hewn simplicity of Dr. Adler's argument," Russell's initial rejoinder supposedly began.

Against Russell, Sidney took the position that, yes, the risk even of extinction was worth it: he held, as he put it in an epigraph to the book in which the debate was later republished, that "it is better to be a live jackal than a dead lion—for jackals, not men; and that those who are prepared to live like men and, if necessary, die like men, have the best prospect of surviving as free men and escaping the fate of jackals and lions." In the actual debate, which took place over the course of three issues of the *New Leader*, Sidney ripped, roasted, and fricasseed Bertrand Russell, making his position seem mean, ruinous, and cowardly. It was a most impressive performance, and one that helped stiffen intellectual resistance to the advances of the Soviet Union during a difficult time.

THE first book by Sidney I ever read was a closely printed, tightly argued collection of essays entitled *Political Power and Personal Freedom*. I remember tackling it, with my shirt off, during a number of scorching afternoons in a furnished, un-air-conditioned studio apartment in Little Rock, Arkansas, during the summer of 1959, in a lather brought on by a combination of Southern humidity and intellectual excitement. The book is a catechism, a *vade mecum*, of democratic theory; it not only sets out the strongest explanation of and justification for democracy that I have ever encountered, but along the way establishes a guide for distinguishing those governments whose claims to be democratic are true from those that are specious—a guide that would prove to be especially useful over the next thirty years. This may sound like dry stuff, but it didn't in the least seem so to me, who, with the lingering habits of a student, underlined roughly two-thirds of the book for future reference.

It was a book written with evident passion, and the passion derived in good part from Sidney's own passionate belief in reason. He did not, like some bush-league Rousseau, believe that all men were inherently reasonable and only education and other institutions of society made them stupid, but he did believe that reason remained the best weapon available in the fight to improve

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

social and political conditions and to defeat those who would make things worse. In an essay in *Political Power and Personal Freedom* entitled "The Justifications of Democracy," he wrote: "It is noteworthy that, in an age not conspicuous for its appeal to reason, few will give assent to doctrines which they admit to be demonstrably false or out of line with verifiable fact."

It is remarkable how frequently the word "fight" appears in the pages of this book. ("The truth is that the amount of freedom and democracy in the present and future depends as much upon human willingness to fight for them as upon anything else.") Sidney was himself all his life a battler. He knew that people often lied and cheated and operated out of motives that were sometimes tangled and perverse; that political intellectuals not uncommonly rewrote their own personal histories to ensure self-portraits of virtuousness. Somewhere along the line, however, he determined not to let them get away with it.

The three strong philosophical influences on Sidney were Morris Raphael Cohen, Bertrand Russell, and John Dewey, and of the three Dewey, both philosophically and personally, was the man he admired most. Admire him greatly though he did, by temperament Sidney was unable to emulate Dewey, whom he once described as "naturally shy, reticent, and undemonstrative in manner." Nobody would have applied such words to Sidney. ("Sidney, Sidney, let him speak.") But Dewey did, according to Sidney, appreciate "passion, enthusiasm, color, and originality in others." John Dewey must have found all those things in Sidney Hook, while Sidney Hook found in John Dewey a towering standard of intellectual honesty, probity, and above all a complex philosophy—that of pragmatism—which Sidney seemed able to express better than Dewey himself. "When I read you," Dewey once told him, "I understand myself better."

Sidney felt a lifelong sense of obligation to Dewey and an allegiance of similar duration to pragmatism, which, in his view, had acquired an entirely false popular reputation as little more than a philosophy of usefulness, itself so useful to the American spirit of opportunity and the cult of success. In Sidney's reading of it, pragmatism was a "method of clarifying ideas and therefore preeminently a method of criticism." The only truly American contribution to philosophy, pragmatism—whose proponents before John Dewey were Charles Peirce and William James—attempted to clarify ideas by testing their consequences in the behavior of human beings. According to Sidney, in his essay "Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life," pragmatism also taught "a temper of mind toward the vital options which men confront when they become aware of what alternative proposals commit them to."

> It [pragmatism] stressed the efficacy of human ideals and actions and at the same time their inescapable limitations. It forswore the promise of total solutions and wholesale salvation for piecemeal gains. Yet far from embracing easy formulae of the ultimate reconciliation of conflicting interests and values, it acknowledged the reality of piecemeal losses even when we risk our lives to achieve the gains.

"Philosophies," said John Dewey, "are different ways of construing life," and Sidney construed pragmatism not as a struggle for personal salvation but as the pursuit of understanding of a kind useful to a philosopher. In due course such understanding would be useful in influencing the life of one's time, through providing ideas that advanced the general human enterprise and through criticizing other ideas that retarded it. Sidney referred to this function of philosophy as "normative social inquiry" and made plain that it dealt with "the problems of man."

SIDNEY'S was very much a worldly, as opposed to an other-worldly, philosophy. For him what gave life its tragic quality was not the presence of evil in the world, or that human beings grow old, sicken, and die—such things he regarded as among the given conditions and not "the realities fundamental to the tragic sense of life." Where he found tragedy was in the realm of moral experience, in which one is often called upon to choose between the good and the right, the good and the good, the right and the right, and where every mediation entails sacrifice and few decisions can be reached with anything approaching moral confidence, but where nevertheless mediations must be attempted and decisions made. Pragmatism was no mere appendage to Sidney's thought but precisely at the heart of it. In our many telephone conversations, he frequently brought up stories about John Dewey or quoted something Dewey had once said, almost always approvingly. When Hilton Kramer, toward the close of an admirable and moving tribute ("The Importance of Sidney Hook," COMMENTARY, August 1987), remarked that Dewey's influence on him was costly, "for Dewey's is a spiritually arid philosophy," Sidney shot back a much-aggrieved answer. My guess is, too, that Sidney's pragmatism partially explains his late-life advocacy of euthanasia, which put off many people as cold-blooded, scientistic, and anti-life. But Sidney, who struck me as having a great appetite for life, admired Socrates' conscious choice of his own death, and perhaps felt that, on a less heroic level, everyone ought to be allowed such an element of decision. Pragmatism's emphasis on this world, this life, may have caused him to demote the importance of death in the drama of life. He himself thought the existentialists tended to overdo things in this regard, and once wrote: "It has never been clear to me why those who are nauseated by life, not by this or that kind

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of life but any kind of life, should be so fearful of death."

Sidney's physical struggles over a long life may also have contributed to his views on euthanasia. From the outset his health problems came into our conversations, though he got no pleasure from complaint and never dwelt on his illnesses. Once, when I asked him how he was, he replied, "Would you like what my wife calls an 'organ recital'?" Earlier he had apologized to me for the sound of his voice, which, owing to surgery, was throaty and whispery. "I sound," he said, "like the Godfather." Another time, when I told him that galley proofs of a review he had written for the *American Scholar* would reach him in two or three weeks, he replied that he didn't think he would be alive to read them, for he was about to go into the hospital for surgery to remove scar tissue caused by another, earlier operation and didn't expect to survive it. "Don't ever have elective surgery," he warned me in his Godfather voice with its New York accent. The last time we spoke, Sidney mentioned that he had been suffering from carpal-tunnel syndrome, a condition of the nerves that badly affects the use of one's hands, which in Sidney's case was especially troubling because, as he explained, "I can't really think without a pen in my hand." (Until the end, he had a clear, vigorous handwriting, and most of the letters I received from him were in longhand.) He didn't believe his already weakened heart could make it through the operation that might be required to treat this latest problem, and he hoped to avoid having to undergo it. Evidently he could not avoid the operation and though he did survive it, he died shortly thereafter.

"HELLO, Joe, it's Sidney Hook. Is this a bad time to call?" Truth to tell, it often was. For some reason, Sidney seemed fairly frequently to call me at eight o'clock Saturday night, Chicago time, which was six o'clock in Palo Alto, where he lived, except for the lengthy summers he spent at his place in Vermont. Although he had lived for years in Palo Alto, working out of the Hoover Institution at Stanford, it may well be that Sidney never quite went off New York time. But when a man of Sidney's age, with his medical record, asks if it's a bad time to call, you say not at all, even if it happens to be 3:00 A.M. New Year's morning. ("Sidney, Sidney, speak, speak!")

Whatever the actual reason for Sidney's call—some small piece of editorial business, a query about a younger intellectual whom he thought I could fill him in on, a wish to tell me he had enjoyed something I had written—the conversation always soon veered off into (for me) some delightful divagation. Many of these anecdotes, sidebars, digressions Sidney later used in *Out of Step*, his autobiography, but I felt myself privileged to hear them at first hand. In this way he told me that the anarchist leader Carlo Tresca had confided in him that Sacco (of Sacco and Vanzetti) was guilty; that the New York Philosophy Club had to make a rule that everyone present must comment whenever a paper was read, in order to prevent Morris Raphael Cohen from dominating the discussion; that he, Sidney, had personally to argue the editors of *Partisan Review* into seeing the ideological correctness of World War II. I can't recall if Sidney was recounting a debate he had had with Jacques Maritain or Étienne Gilson over the existence of God, but I do recall his saying that it was all over "when I trotted out the problem of evil." I have since frequently imagined Sidney, in red and white jockey's silks, smiling astride a huge snorting black stallion, The Problem of Evil, which he has in firm control.

To those who did not know him, Sidney must have seemed the quintessential philosophical tough guy, a man whose characteristic utterance would be something like the following from *Out of Step*: "Every sentence in the foregoing paragraph [by Leon Trotsky] is either false or question-begging, and taken together they make incoherent all of Trotsky's own moral judgments." This tough-guy image was close to my own view of Sidney until my first editorial dealings with him. At my solicitation, he had sent me a memoir of Morris Raphael Cohen for a series on great teachers that we were running. It was a splendid piece of work, and I telephoned to tell him so, adding that I intended to run it in our next, which was our summer, issue. "Why don't you hold it for the autumn issue?" he asked. "Nobody reads summer issues." "I think that's a cliché and a mistake," I replied. "Besides, when you publish a quarterly magazine, you have to assume that people read all your issues. You can't afford to write off a fourth of what you publish." I went ahead and ran his memoir in the summer issue, and as it turned out he received a good number of letters about it. He called to tell me that he had been wrong and I right. "This is a great day for me," I said. "Why?" he asked. "Because from now on I intend to tell anyone who disagrees with me that before he goes any further, he ought to know he's dealing with a man who won an argument with Sidney Hook." Silence on the other end, followed by a sweet, gently cackling laugh that I would hear often in the years ahead.

Furious in debate, always serious about serious things, nothing if not earnest in his general approach to life, Sidney nonetheless had a nice and sometimes sly sense of humor. In his autobiography, discussing anti-Semitism in the academy, he writes that "not even Mortimer J. Adler [later a convert to Christianity], who as a champion of the Divinity had rebuked Dewey for his metaphysical impiety, could drive him to anti-Semitism." Sidney passes the true test of a sense of humor, the ability to recognize one's own ridiculousness, when, also in his autobiography, he describes the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

way he used to trail after the always sexually ambitious Bertrand Russell, who would be putting the moves on "some luscious girl" at a Greenwich Village party while Sidney was interrupting to ask "whether he still believed in the theory of types or what he thought of Henri Poincaré or Couturat or Gödel." Whenever I heard a decent joke, I would try to remember to pass it along to Sidney, either over the phone or in a letter; he was an appreciative audience.

But then Sidney was generally appreciative of other people and their efforts, and generous in his praise of those he admired. At the party celebrating his eightieth birthday, after various speakers had delivered tributes to him and a telegram of congratulation from the White House had been read, Sidney remarked that although people often talked about his intellectual courage, in his opinion Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz had shown far more courage than he in exposing themselves to criticism and abuse. I remember his once telling me, too, how stalwart Melvin Lasky (the editor of *Encounter*) could be in situations calling for physical courage, and that he much admired Lasky's fighting heart. His letters to me were filled with kind words for academic colleagues like Edward Shils, Lewis Feuer, Richard Rorty, and others. He dispensed praise—which Thomas Mann, in his diaries, used to refer to as Vitamin P—wonderfully well, but he was impatient when it was dispensed to him. Whenever I told him that something he had written was extremely good, he would change the subject. "I want to tell you," I wrote in one of my early letters to him, "how proud I am to have a hand in publishing your work in the *American Scholar*. I think you are an extraordinary man—and a man to whom I and a great many other people owe a considerable intellectual debt." I am pleased that I wrote that sentence, though he never responded to it.

It was at his eightieth-birthday celebration that Sidney reported on one of the most intellectually gratifying moments in his life. A professor had informed him that he had written his dissertation on a political thinker whom Sidney had long ago thoroughly attacked in print, but whose case Sidney had presented so fairly as to excite a then-young academic's curiosity. Sidney greatly valued fairness, honesty, playing the game by the agreed-upon rules. "I am old-fashioned enough to believe," he wrote to me when I had asked him to review one of Malcolm Cowley's later, quite self-serving books, "one can and should be fair even to someone who is unfair to others."

ALTHOUGH Sidney was in many quarters hated, he was not himself much of a hater. A tough and terrible opponent, yes, but not a true hater. I happen to be a pretty fair country hater myself, and I never saw any of the requisite qualities in Sidney. Your good hater is obsessive about his enemies; he tends to make enmity personal; he does not merely dislike his opponents but detests, despises, loathes them. Nothing of this personal intensity ever crept into Sidney's judgments. Instead he seemed always freshly surprised, amazed, astonished at the atrocious behavior of his own enemies. When the New York *Times Book Review* passed up reviewing four of Sidney's books in a row, he reported this outrageous fact to me not with the sense of outrage it deserved but with an air of someone amazed that an editor could get away with something like that. He would recount the false political past that a prominent literary critic had invented for himself as if to say, "Wild, isn't it?" I do not mean to imply that Sidney was a naïf—he had fought too many political battles for that—but meanness and dishonesty nonetheless seemed a little crazy to him. They did not quite make sense. Something of this quality of honest puzzlement in Sidney came through to me recently in a remark attributed to the biologist, Max Delbrück: "If you cheat in science you are simply missing the point."

In the realm of politics, Sidney took on the burdensome role of reminding people what the point was. He was forever correcting historical error owing to political bias, jumping in to remind people of what actually happened, straightening out people on the lessons they had long ago learned but chosen to forget. These efforts, needless to say, were not warmly appreciated. Sidney took a good pounding from those who did not wish to be corrected, reminded, straightened out. For a long stretch—from the early 1960's to the middle of the 1970's, when anti-anti-Communism was riding high among political intellectuals—the mere mention of Sidney Hook, whose name was synonymous with anti-Communism, drew fire and spit. But even after the hatred of Sidney had let up some, he himself did not in the least let up. No untruth that came his way was too minute to respond to; a lie was a lie, no matter how obscure its provenance or backwoods its venue. And when Sidney discovered a lie he had to point it out, tear it down, correct it. He would fire off a letter to the New York *Times* or to a student newspaper with equal ardor. "At a time when age and achievement had earned him the right to retire from active political life, he devoted all his energies and most of his husbanded hours of leisure to the fight for freedom, from which many of his younger colleagues turned away." Sidney wrote that about John Dewey, and of course it was quite as true of him, who at the time of his death was enmeshed in writing about the curriculum controversy at Stanford.

Not that Sidney's entire life was a battle. I used to imagine him during his summers in Vermont, walking the New England countryside discussing the old philosophical questions with his dear friend Ernest Nagel, who died a few years before he did. (Did one or the other of them, I wonder,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ever trot out of the problem of good?) My distant sense is that his family life was rich and satisfying: *Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life* is dedicated to his four grandsons and their generation; *Out of Step* to his wife Ann, "unfailing source of strength and joy." His health in his last years was wretched, but his conscience (I should imagine) clear and his mind in splendid working order. Listening to him talk, I sometimes thought that Sidney had the reverse of Alzheimer's disease—he remembered everything. The last piece he wrote for the *American Scholar* was a strong but by no means hostile criticism of Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind.* That piece, and the response he had to it, turned Sidney to thinking once more about the questions, issues, and problems of education. Rosinante to the road again.

Nowadays it is acknowledged that a scientist may be altogether unscientific in the daily conduct of his life, a poet a fool, a novelist a perfect pig of vanity. But a philosopher one somehow still expects to live like a philosopher: the life and the work influencing each other and both devoted to the pursuit of wisdom. One is usually disappointed in this expectation, but not in the case of Sidney Hook, in whom man and philosopher were one.

After the tributes made to him at his eightieth-birthday celebration, Sidney rose and spoke: humorously, modestly, seriously, profoundly. Walking from the room after the standing ovation given to him, I felt an exhilaration and lightness of step, and my sense is that nearly everyone else there that night felt something similar. I, for one, have only known such feelings at the conclusion of some extraordinary artistic performance. Sidney's life was, I think, such a performance. He made fighting for one's beliefs—if those beliefs be sound—seem not merely an honorable, but the only honorable, way to live. To have done it for so long, so relentlessly, so fairly as Sidney did constitutes its own kind of greatness. Sidney, of course, would have rejected the assertion that he was in any way a great man. But, take it from one who beat him in argument, Sidney would have been wrong.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Of Time and Poetry

Dan Jacobson

A LITERARY work of any depth arises from experiences which are hard to comprehend and articulate. In the act of composition these are transformed, for the writer himself as well as for the reader, into an experience of quite a different order: namely, into the experience of the story or poem or play.

The distinction appears elementary enough. It is also fraught with difficulty; so much so that we should not be surprised that it is often overlooked, or misunderstood, or denied on ideological grounds. Implicit in the drawing of such a distinction is the belief that the poem or tale is ineluctably the product of forces outside it or anterior to it (the experiences and circumstances from which it arises), and at the same time an imaginatively autonomous creation (the experience which it then becomes). It is precisely this belief from which certain schools or teams of critics would recoil; in all likelihood they would take special exception to the use I have just made of retrograde terms like "imaginative," "autonomous," and "creation."

Some would insist that literary works have no existence, and can logically have no existence, outside or beyond the predetermining social and cultural structures, and the ideological and linguistic systems, of which both the writer and his product are a manifestation. The same is true, they would argue, of our very definition of what constitutes a literary work, let alone the idea of literature as such. Other critics would attack the terms I have used from what appears to be a directly opposite direction. They would insist that the reader is and always must be the master of the work and the creator of its meanings; whatever those meanings are declared to be, the work has no choice and indeed no function but to submit to them.

These different approaches actually have more in common with one another than appearances might at first suggest. Both have an interest in seeing the literary work as not merely passive, but as essentially inert. From where within a poem or tale, both varieties of critic in effect ask, could the secret ingredient of "imaginative autonomy" be supposed to emerge? How does it implant itself and sustain itself there? In the one view, the work can be expressive of nothing more than the operations of the language of which it is an instance, the culture which has molded its form and its readers' expectations, the historical moment (in all dimensions) in which it appears, and the psychological and social pressures to which the writer responds. In the other view, its meanings and hence its value are necessarily and wholly subordinate to the ever-changing preoccupations and demands of an unstable concourse of readers. In either case, what force can there be to the claim that we can understand the poem or tale, or participate in it, only if we see it also as self-determining and self-sustaining?

Frankly, such questions do not seem to me as intellectually devastating as they apparently do to some of those who frame them. We are constantly confronted by phenomena we can explain and respond to only in terms that are inherently paradoxical or contradictory of one another. There are many examples of this, in many fields. An obvious instance is someone we all know well; someone we might simply call Mrs. Jones. She is the daughter of her parents, the wife of her husband, the mother of her children, the sister of her siblings; she is an employee to her employer, a taxpayer to the Internal Revenue Service, a patient to her doctor, a customer to her local supermarket or drugstore, and so on and on, indefinitely. But we know that none of these relationships, nor all of them considered together (if it were possible to conceive such a sum), exhaust what Mrs. Jones is, or how she can be described; and, even more importantly, we know that Mrs. Jones could not *be* daughter, wife, mother, sister, and the rest if she were not also, and at the same time, the center of her own being, something or someone distinct from that which each and all these relationships compel her to be—someone, in other words, self-determining and self-sustaining. These differing ways of describing her are indeed contradictory of one another; they are also indispensable to one another. Moreover, it is one thing to recognize that none of us can ever wholly know Mrs. Jones, under whichever aspect we choose to consider her; it is quite another to feel free therefore to deny those aspects of her which are inconvenient to us, or to call her Mrs. Brown if it so pleases us, or to claim

DAN JACOBSON, the well-known novelist, essayist, and literary critic, adapted the present piece from his Inaugural Lecture as Professor of English at University College, London.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in dogmatic fashion that we are entitled to regard her today as a different person from the one she was yesterday.

The analogy is of course imperfect, like all analogies; Mrs. Jones herself would probably be the first to point this out. But it seems to me useful nevertheless. And if it is objected that in making it I have in effect imputed to the poem or story a consciousness which it does not have, and cannot be said to have, I would respond that the work was once an element of the consciousness of the writer, and it exists now as a poem or story only by becoming an element of the consciousness of readers, in the act either of their reading it or of their recollecting it. Consciousness, an ever-fluctuating, ever-renewed, yet never-random consciousness, is its being.

THESE general remarks have a direct relevance to the comparison I wish to make between aspects of the poetry of T.S. Eliot and Thomas Hardy. (Hardy is known to most readers chiefly as a novelist; but it is as a poet only that he will be discussed here.) Certainly, my argument will not depend on a blurring or belittling of the differences between the two men. Quite the contrary. It is hard to think of two other major 20th-century English poets—if Hardy may be called a 20th-century poet, and Eliot an Englishman—whose lives, interests, views of the world, and poetic output appear to be so unlike one another's. In every respect they would seem to be at odds: the traditionalist Hardy in the one corner, and the modernist Eliot in the other; the simple songster, as Hardy sometimes liked to think of himself, versus the poet of learned allusion; the man who believed that "all we can do is write on the old themes in the old styles" and the one who set out at the age of twenty-two, with an extraordinary degree of self-confidence, to introduce new styles, new themes, and hitherto suppressed tones of voice into English poetry; the writer of literally hundreds upon hundreds of poems in a multitude of forms—setting wholly aside his voluminous output as a novelist—and the fastidious producer of what amounted, as far as his poetry is concerned, to not much more than two modestly sized volumes; the self-educated Dorset countryman who set up home and died a few miles from where he was born and the subtle, transplanted, cosmopolitan theoretician and social philosopher, graduate of Harvard, matriculant of Oxford and the Sorbonne; the village atheist and the Anglo-American Anglo-Catholic; the man who regarded critics as "parasites no less noxious than autograph hunters" and the one who spent much of his life elaborating a series of critical essays which helped to transform, for a generation and more, the accepted view of English literary history.

After all of which there perhaps remains just one further way of suggesting the differences between them; and that is by asking readers to try to imagine, if they dare, Eliot going through his poems, as Hardy did, and marking each one of them "S," "N," or "C"—"S" for Sad, "N" for Neutral, and "C" for Cheerful—and then totting up the totals in each category. This, according to Robert Graves in his autobiography, *Goodbye to All That,* is what Hardy did in order to refute the charge of pessimism which the reviewers had made against him.*

In fact, all the two men might seem to have in common is that for different reasons the writings of both were for a time regarded as a source of scandal, before each in turn eventually reached the safe haven of Britain's highest civil honor, the Order of Merit. Hardy never commented publicly on Eliot's work, though he did, according to Robert Gittings's *The Older Hardy* (1980), copy some passages from "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" into his notebook, as an example of the "free verse" he reprobated in conversation. For his part Eliot made several rather patronizing references to Hardy. Putting him together with D.H. Lawrence, he said of them that they might have been better poets if they had not devoted so much of their energies to the novel. In *After Strange Gods,* with a characteristic mixture of seeming scrupulosity and intense disdain, Eliot condemned Hardy's novels not for themselves so much as for what he insisted they stood for: extreme emotionalism, passion for its own sake, decadence.

So why bring them together? For reasons of mutual irritation, merely? Not exactly. Anyone who greatly admires them both is bound to set them side by side in search of kinship, even similitude. And if this is done it appears that they do have one preoccupation, one obsession, it might be termed, in common. Admittedly, they express it in very different fashion and to different ends, but nevertheless it can be said to make them brothers of a kind. Both men are obsessed with what can be called "the quality of time." The phrase itself is adapted from Hardy's poem "At Castle Boterel," one of the series he wrote after the death of his wife Emma. Many of his greatest poems are to be found among these. In "At Castle Boterel" he writes of revisiting a hill he and his wife-to-be had climbed decades before:

> What we did as we climbed, and what we talked of
> Matters not much, nor to what it led,—

* In Michael Millgate's *Thomas Hardy: A Biography* (1982) there is another and more detailed version of the episode; or of one like it. The letter-coding adopted for the poems is different ("T" for tragedy; "C" for comedy; "L" for love-song; and "O"—Millgate suggests—for objective) and the sums are done for one volume only, *Human Shows.* The intention, however, is more or less as Graves remembered it to be; at the end of his calculations Hardy noted that "tragedy or sadness" occupied only two-fifths of the whole.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Something that life will not be balked of
Without rude reason till hope is dead,
And feeling fled.

It filled but a minute. But was there ever
A time of such quality, since or before,
In that hill's story? To one mind never,
Though it has been climbed, foot-swift, foot-sore,
By thousands more.

A little later in the poem, by way of contrast with that "time of such quality," Hardy refers to the "primeval rocks [that] form the road's steep border," and speaks also of "Time's unflinching rigor"—Time, on this occasion, though not on the previous one, being capitalized. Essentially, what I wish to suggest is that Eliot and Hardy have in common not only a capacity to recreate in their verse moments which they feel to have been of a truly transfiguring intensity, but also a compulsion to try to relate those transfiguring moments with the rest of time as they have experienced it: the waste sad time stretching before and after, as Eliot calls it, with a note of dismay and dismissiveness special to him.

In Eliot's case the movement or dialectic between the two orders of time—ecstatic and revelatory time on the one hand, and, on the other, ordinary time, banal time, time before and after—is often particularly violent. Any reader of his verse will recognize both varieties readily enough. In the same poem, to take a relatively little-known example from his "Difficulties of a Statesman," we find

O hidden under the Hidden under the Where
the dove's foot rested and locked for a moment,
A still moment, repose of noon, set under the upper branches of noon's widest tree
Under the breast feather stirred by the small wind after noon
There the cyclamen spreads its wings, there the clematis droops over the lintel
O mother. . .

—we find that, and

What shall I cry?
Arthur Edward Cyril Parker is appointed telephone operator
At a salary of one pound ten a week rising by annual increments of five shillings
To two pounds ten a week; with a bonus of thirty shillings at Christmas
And one week's leave a year.
A committee has been appointed to nominate a commission of engineers
To consider the Water Supply.

And so the poem continues. Many critics have remarked that Eliot uses a strikingly narrow, recurring range of images—or "correlatives," to kidnap his own word—to evoke his moments of transfiguration, or of the promise of transfiguration; moments characterized not so much by happiness or unhappiness as by a feeling of overwhelming expectancy, a dizzy physical excitement indistinguishable from a sense of spiritual release. Over and over again such moments are inhabited or intimated by images of girls, girls' hair, flowers, leaves, children, light, stillness—any of which can arouse in the speaker of the poem an almost suffocated presentiment of both liberation and self-annihilation. If my attempts to describe *his* descriptions of the state sound paradoxical, so be it; he is presenting an experience which is inherently paradoxical in nature—not least because the transformation it offers is at once denied and eroded by all that which is other than itself: by unredeemed, unillumined time, the time perpetual to those who do not even know that another mode of apprehending time is possible.

How, then, are such moments to be understood? Can one be confident that they will ever recur? And if it is impossible to be sure of them, in any sense, if they too are subject to the promiscuous tramplings of time, is the urgent conviction of significance they bring merely delusory? In answer to these questions an onlooker might say, "Well, such moments are preserved in the poetry; they are secure there; the poem itself is a moment of potential meaning wrested from time's unrelenting successiveness." True enough; yet I suspect that a reader is more likely than the writer himself to be consoled by the thought.

A writer goes to his desk for many reasons, some of them of an ignominious kind; others not. But the satisfaction he will actually attain there, if he is lucky, will ultimately be that of having written something that works, that he has got right, that no longer depends directly on him for its vitality: something autonomous, in other words. However intense it may be, that satisfaction is far different from his feeling that he has settled (for good, as it were) his own needs and agitations. In one of his own poems, "The Dry Salvages," Eliot wrote, "The poetry does not matter"; and I believe that the line expresses his consciousness, among other things, of how imperiously necessary to him was his art, and how inadequate it yet remained to his hungers. That Eliot should have felt an ambivalence of this kind does not mark him out as special or peculiar; it is a feeling familiar to many writers. In fact, they are liable to it every time they confront anew, in its ever varying forms, the distinction which I made at the outset: that between the experiences out of which the imaginative work emerges, and the experience which it subsequently becomes.

Occasionally, along with a critic like F.R. Leavis, we are bound to feel that Eliot's depiction of the horrors of unillumined time—all tedium, squalor, waste, lust, habit, timidity, egotism—is so one-sided, or worse than that, so preoccupied with the equivocal pleasure the author takes in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disgust and moral hauteur, that it not only fails to carry conviction in itself, but also affects adversely our response to those ecstatic or epiphanic moments which the poetry strives to realize. Degradation, whether of the self or of others, appears then to be not so much the antithesis of ecstasy as its bosom companion. It is also true that in *Four Quartets* we sometimes find Eliot talking in wistful or minatory terms about the importance of what has been revealed to him, rather than presenting it with the kind of poetic and dramatic power that can alone irresistibly compel our sympathy.

However that may be, it is clear that for Eliot himself his "unattended" moments (as he called them) came to be seen as providing hints of, and a mode of access to, a transcendent and timeless realm, the reality of which he could not doubt. Such moments were bonded, so to speak, to eternity; and the meanings with which they were charged eventually were to become, for him, specifically, doctrinally, Christian in character. This is of course all too brisk a summary of a development marked throughout by a singular combination of resolution and tentativeness on the poet's part. Looking back at it, however, we cannot but be struck by how close was the "fit" between the traditional Christian view of human history overall, and the versions we are given, in the earlier poems, of the lives of Eliot's usually wretched protagonists. In the midst of their unworthy and harried existence, these people find themselves visited by moments of inexplicable illumination. We might remember, then, that in Christian terms, in Pauline terms anyway, history itself is an arena of corruption and death, which is redeemed by the direct intrusion into it of the divine: of a God who enters into human time at an ordinary, banal moment like any other—"in the days of the procurator Pontius Pilate"—and does so to such transfiguring effect that all history culminates in that moment, and all history is derived from it.

In talking of history and doctrine in this manner we may seem to have moved a long way from, say, the exquisitely portrayed girl in Eliot's early "La Figlia Che Piange"; but I do not think that we have; and I do not think Eliot thought so either. The "impossible union" he sought could be made "actual" for him and by him in many ways, some of them unexpected indeed. How remarkable it is, for example, that an unbroken series of commands in the following passage—every verb in it is in the imperative mood—should manage to produce an effect not of self-assertion, but of unmitigated wonder and longing:

Stand on the highest pavement of the stair—
Lean on a garden urn—
Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair—
Clasp your flowers to you with a pained
surprise—
Fling them to the ground and turn
With a fugitive resentment in your eyes:
But weave, weave the sunlight in your hair.

Of Hardy, by contrast, the first thing that must be said is that there is no intimation in his verse of any world beyond this one: the one we know to be ruled inexorably by temporal succession. The second thing to be said is that that is what makes so heartbreaking the transfiguring moments which appear in his poems.

These moments are usually personal and autobiographical in character, or are presented as such, but they can arise too from the poet's contemplation of the most ordinary and yet most bewildering processes of nature. For instance, we all "know" (in some more or less offhand, more or less theoretical, fashion) that after death the bodies of living creatures disintegrate and return to the matter of which they are composed. Our own bodies, too. In a poem like "Proud Songsters," Hardy is capable of compelling us to face the incomprehensibility of the process as if for the first time. He does it not by speaking of the inertness of matter as cognate with death, but by seeing it as charged forever with the potentiality of life. That is a transfiguration indeed: one, if only we could see it, which takes place everywhere and at every moment.

The thrushes sing as the sun is going,
And the finches whistle in pairs,
And as it gets dark loud nightingales
  In bushes
Pipe, as they can when April wears,
  As if all Time were theirs.

These are brand-new birds of twelve-months'
growing,
Which a year ago, or less than twain,
No finches were, nor nightingales,
  Nor thrushes,
But only particles of grain,
  And earth, and air, and rain.

No "particle" of the poem is dispensable, or any the less important than any other. Yet it is typical of Hardy that his slight oddities of phrasing should often turn out to bear a special freight of meaning. In the line about the birds piping "as they can when April wears" we miss at first, after the verb "wears," the noun-phrase which might make the whole clause sound more idiomatic—when April wears its new foliage, we think it might be, or some equivalent. But if that object were there, something important to the poem would be lost. As we read it, we become belatedly conscious of the suggestion not only that April actually "wears" these birds as if they were some kind of ornament, but that they too will soon be *worn* away, or worn out, like the month itself. And yet they pipe "As if all Time were theirs."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I HAVE already mentioned, in referring to "At Castle Boterel," the sequence of directly recollective poems—poems of regret, and grief, and remorse—Hardy wrote after the death of his wife Emma, with whom he had shared many years of conjugal unhappiness. Scattered throughout the nine hundred pages of the *Collected Poems*, admittedly among a lot of inferior material, there are others on the theme of memory which are almost as strongly felt as these. For Hardy, it sometimes seems that the fuller and richer the memory of any particular moment was, and the more he treasured it, the deeper would be the sadness (and, often enough, the guilt) it provoked.

In this regard Hardy is quite unlike another and (I think) even greater poet of memory, William Wordsworth. Many of Wordsworth's memories in his poetic autobiography, *The Prelude*, are full of guilt and terror, as well as of ecstasy; but it is extraordinary to register how little of a pang he ever seems to feel over the fact that what he is remembering *is* over, does belong to the past, was once shared by those who are now dead, can never be anything for him but a memory. In her recent study, *Memory* (1987), Mary Warnock writes:

> . . . it is not only for our lost childhood that we yearn. Anything that is *over*, even though we may be thankful that it is, carries with it the possibility of yearning. We shall never *have* it again. It is a lost *possession*. . . . The past is a paradise from which we are necessarily excluded, and this is true even though, when it was present, it was less than paradisiacal. [Emphasis in original]

Wordsworth does feel yearning; but not of the kind Mary Warnock describes. It is not the pastness of the past, as such, that saddens him; it is the specific fear of the memories he treasures receding from him, and of their losing their freshness and restorative power as a result.

This anxiety, at any rate, is one which Hardy never feels. The hurt he suffers has another source. His memories, in all their uncontrollable vivacity, do indeed speak constantly to him of what is no longer the case, of what can no longer be amended, of experiences once shared that are now his alone. Through dreams, longings, hauntings, throbbings (to use some characteristically Hardyesque words), the past continually comes to him; but he knows that he can never go back to it. And soon he himself, too, will be unavailable even for visitings such as these.

Cause enough for sadness, certainly; though in responding to it we cannot but notice again the strange paradox whereby loss becomes gain for the poet, at least in giving him the very matter of his verse. As we go through the poems, however, we also find frequently expressed in them a loss of a more ironic and unexpected kind. Mary Warnock speaks of the past as a lost *possession*; it is something we no longer *have*. In many of his poems Hardy's view is bleaker than this. Over and over again we find him mourning that those moments which have since come to mean more to him than any others actually passed unnoticed when they occurred; in what he calls their "live time." He did not recognize them. He did not know then how important they were; or were to become. He did not possess them when he had the opportunity to do so. Only in retrospect, when it is too late, have they revealed their "quality" to him. Eliot's protagonists may be dumbfounded as they gaze into "the heart of light, the silence"; but they know that something of great importance is upon them. Hardy's, all too often, are looking away.

The last phrase is taken from one of his finest poems, with the wonderfully revelatory title "The Self-Unseeing." It speaks not about his mourning after his wife's death—and his grief for what he and she had done to each other, when they had had their chance to do better—but about a period much earlier in his life; about his mother and father (who was a gifted amateur violinist) and himself as a child.

> Here is the ancient floor,
> Footworn and hollowed and thin,
> Here was the ancient door
> Where the dead feet walked in.
>
> She sat here in her chair.
> Smiling into the fire;
> He who played stood there,
> Bowing it higher and higher.
>
> Childlike I danced in a dream;
> Blessings emblazoned that day;
> Everything glowed with a gleam;
> Yet we were looking away!

In another poem, "In Front of the Landscape," using again the image of a fatefully averted glance, he speaks to harsher effect of certain "slighted" moments in the past.

> Thus do they now show hourly before the intenser
> Stare of the mind
> As they were ghosts avenging their slights by my bypast
> Body-borne eyes. . . .

Which leaves us with the unanswerable question: which is the truly transfiguring moment, that of occurrence or that of memory? The moment we do not even know we will remember, or the moment when it returns to us? Or is the transfiguration ultimately to be found in the poet's stubborn and utterly un-Eliotic conviction that it is precisely because both kinds of moment are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

certain to be annihilated that they are therefore most to be valued?

BOTH poets are able to compel an imaginative assent from us when we read them. That is not the mark of our frivolity as readers, but of their seriousness as writers. Different though they are from one another, personally, artistically, philosophically, each has experienced at a profound depth the beliefs which have given shape to his world, and which the world has shaped within him. In submitting their beliefs and experiences to the constraints of literary form, or (to put the same point in quite another way) in permitting them to be merged inextricably with the pleasures of rhythm, rhyme, metaphor, narrative, the quasi-physical mimetic effects which lurk within words, even the layout of lines and stanzas on the page—in doing all this, each of the poets has endowed the moments of special intensity of which his poems speak with a "quality" they did not have before. They have been given a life that does not look back to the writer for its fulfillment, but forward to the reader. That is at once a definition of the poem's autonomy and a description of its precariousness. Each of the poems can be seen as standing forever in a special relation to the time that stretches before and after it: before and after the poet's act of composition; before and after our apprehension of the result.

The consequences for the reader in sharing that life, in however provisional a fashion, are impossible to categorize; if we are thinking in terms of action or belief, we can say no more than that they will vary with the character and circumstances of each individual. I do want to suggest, though, that one of the reasons why literature matters as much as it does to us, or to some of us, is precisely because of its *in*consequence. This must sound heretical indeed, not to say frivolous, and especially so when one considers the effects that writers have had at certain times on the consciousness of the nations and communities to which they belong; and the earnestness of some of those who speak of literature as though it might lead us back to God, or be a substitute for God, or help directly to bring about the kinds of political and social regeneration they long for. In effect they ask: what is the good of it, otherwise? My answer is that however hungry we may be for certainty, for instruction, for direction, we have a hunger also (at least intermittently) for relief from these, and from the burdens they bring.

Writers, even the bossiest or most anguished of them, seek that relief, too. That is precisely why they are attracted to the formal constraints and pleasures of the art they practice, and to the sense of distance and provisionality, even of playfulness, which only these can give them. Possibilities which are tentative and speculative; selves which for one reason or another they are unable to acknowledge in any other manner; needs and impulses which are irreconcilably at war with one another; beliefs they wish to hold or are half-afraid to admit they do hold: all these are made manifest to them, restored to them in the literary work—and look, they have suffered no harm. . . . On the contrary. The provisionality out of which the particular work speaks and to which it appeals is the release that literature at its most refined and intense can alone offer them.

The same may be true of the reader (if he so wishes). He too may take pleasure (if he so wishes) in the provisionality of the work, and hence in its "inconsequence," and in the intricate relationship which both of these have with its autonomy. Only through the literary form he has chosen does it become possible for the writer to look upon his beliefs and experiences as if they were another's; and for readers to look upon them as if they were their own. That is not really a modest claim to make on behalf of the literary imagination, though to some it may appear to be so.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anatomy of an Execution

Arturo J. Cruz, Jr.

The afternoon light was beginning to fail when Fidel Castro arrived at his office in the Palace of the Revolution. His younger brother Raúl, general of the army and second secretary of the party, was waiting to meet with him in order to discuss a report drafted by "dozens and dozens" of Cuban military counterintelligence officers. The report had been in the works for more than two weeks, with teams of drafters working in shifts around the clock to complete it. Its subject was the Hero of the Cuban Republic, Division General Arnaldo Ochoa Sánchez.

From that late Sunday afternoon on June 11, 1989 until the dawn of the following day, the Castro brothers closeted themselves in the palace. After fourteen hours of intense discussion they decided that the time had come to jail Ochoa, his aide-de-camp Captain Martinez, and two other top revolutionary apparatchiks, the de la Guardia brothers. The latter two men, Patricio and Tony, were Fidel's closest confidantes. For many years they had run the Special Forces unit within the Ministry of Interior—the most secret, powerful, and trusted cadre of Fidel's personal Communist court.

On Wednesday night, June 14, Raúl Castro addressed the nation on radio and television. He spoke for two hours, at times almost incoherently, and his words betrayed a barely suppressed hatred for Ochoa—an envious passion toward a colleague who was a senior general officer in the fullest, most professional military sense. Raúl accused Ochoa of being irreverent; he complained about Ochoa's jokes; he derided what he called Ochoa's "populist deviations" with the troops (referring, evidently, to the one thing which Raúl himself has never enjoyed with the Cuban enlisted man—genuine popularity).

Raúl's objective, clearly, was to destroy the reputation that Ochoa had achieved for thirty years of service to the Cuban Revolution—in the Sierra Maestra during the Revolution itself, in Venezuela at the beginning of the 1960's, and later in Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and Angola, where he was named chief of the Cuban military mission in November 1987.

There was no more senior, tested, or successful officer in the Cuban army; but on the night of June 14, Raúl Castro portrayed Ochoa as an inept commander. In Raúl's description, Ochoa's fame was a myth. Ochoa was a nothing, a man who had taken credit for military successes actually designed by the great genius Fidel.

Not once during his two-hour speech did Raúl mention corruption or drug trafficking. Yet two days later, on June 16, the party's highest organ, *Granma*, published on its front page a long editorial emphasizing that it was precisely for these crimes that Ochoa and fourteen others had been jailed.

It took another week before details were released. On Thursday, June 22, *Granma*'s pages brimmed with a lurid tale of false passports and of trips by Ochoa's military aide from Angola to Cuba, from Cuba to Panama, and then on to Colombia to set up drug deals. *Granma* also described meetings in Havana, where representatives of Pablo Escobar, a ringleader of the Medellín drug cartel, met surrogates of Ochoa and Tony de la Guardia. There were cameo appearances as well by Mexican smugglers and American experts on laundering cash who tried to deal with the Colombians through Cuban intermediaries. Cuba, it seemed, was being used as the final embarkation point for cocaine on its way to the huge market in the United States.

The day after this fantastic tale was published, the Cuban official press reproduced a message from the new chief of the military mission in Angola, Division General Leopoldo Cintras Frias—"Polo," as Fidel called him. The message was addressed to Raúl Castro on behalf of the Cuban generals, officers, noncommissioned officers, and enlisted men in Angola. They asked that the full weight of revolutionary law be brought to bear on the "traitor Ochoa." That Saturday, the party organ transmitted a similar message, again directed to Raúl, this time from the "Blas Roca" labor brigade, also demanding punishment for Ochoa. The message ended with a salutation, expressing "our pride in being able to live in our Socialist Fatherland in the epoch of Fidel."

With the publication of those two messages—from soldiers and workers—Raúl could regard his task as successfully completed. The curtain was about to fall on the most important piece of political theater produced in the thirty years of the Cuban Revolution.

Once, when the revolution was young and Fidel's popularity was beyond question, Cuba's great helmsman decided to resolve the question of his political succession. In the Plaza de la Revolucion—that huge open space where he makes all his important pronouncements—Fidel told an adoring crowd that if he were to die, he would be followed by Comandante Camilo Cienfuegos. If Camilo were somehow to die, then Che Guevara

Arturo J. Cruz, Jr. *is the author* of Memoirs of a Counterrevolutionary: Life With the Contras, the Sandinistas, and the CIA, *which has just been published by Doubleday. His article, "Mr. Yankee Goes Home," appeared in our August issue.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would take his place. And if Che were to die, little brother Raúl would take his place.

Not long afterward, Camilo's small plane was lost over Cuban territorial waters. Seven years later Che was killed in the depths of the Bolivian jungle. Without Camilo and without Che, the only possible successor was Raúl, who was only too happy to step into second place, finally tapped as the formal heir to the family business.

In the oldest Latin American tradition of making government a nepotistic affair, Raúl opted to take over the Cuban armed forces. He methodically assembled a corps of officers who were personally loyal to him, and he made sure that future army generals would be "raúlistas." The "fidelistas," or those who simply had not had the good fortune to work with Raúl before the seizure of power, ended up in the Ministry of Interior—that is, the political police. It was there, in the Special Forces section, that the de la Guardia brothers had their power base. They were men untrammeled by ideological scruples, always smiling, and they were avid devotees of the consumer culture, especially in its American forms, forbidden to ordinary Cubans. (According to friends, they always shaved with American shaving creams and made a point of visiting McDonald's on each of their many foreign journeys.)

As for Ochoa, he too was and (at least until he developed his own ambitions) remained a "fidelista." It was said that he called Fidel by his first name (without the usual obligatory servile embellishments). Ochoa, it was rumored, had even presumed to make friendly fun of Fidel's advancing age—Fidel's tendency to forget where he put things, or what he wanted to say, or what day it was.

FROM Raúl's point of view, Ochoa was also dangerously popular. As a military man he symbolized much more than the struggle of Castro's tiny guerrilla army against the dictator Fulgencio Batista. More tellingly, Ochoa embodied a new Cuban military thrust into far more expansive conflicts: two wars in Africa and the Nicaraguan campaign.

Thus, when Ochoa arrived in Nicaragua at the end of 1983, he came invested with total authority as chief of the Cuban military mission. Dressed in a Cuban general's uniform, medals glistening, surrounded by adjutants who lugged his maps and papers, Ochoa lectured the Sandinistas at length on military strategy and on the Soviet weaponry which would be needed to mount the expected campaign against the *contras*—the insurgents whom the Sandinistas were failing to defeat. Together with the Soviets, he decided against the imprudent, politically provocative step of importing MIGs into Nicaragua. Instead, he concluded that what the Sandinistas needed were armed helicopters—the famous MI-24s—which the Soviets were using with such lethal effect in Afghanistan.

The Sandinistas regarded Ochoa as somewhat arrogant, but at the same time they were forced to respect his technical knowledge. It was this respect which made it possible for them to stomach his endless demands—for vehicles in top working order, for luxurious houses. In time Humberto Ortega, Commander in Chief of the Sandinista army, had had enough of the Cuban general's high-handed attitudes. He ordered Ochoa to replace his uniform with mufti, at least while he was performing duties in Nicaragua.

But in spite of such tensions, Ochoa remained in the country for two-and-a-half years, teaching the Nicaraguans how to use Soviet equipment and teaching Humberto and his boys the arts of professional warfare. The *contra* war turned around. Under Ochoa's guidance the Sandinistas took the offensive and began to win.

It was not only the Nicaraguans, however, who were learning new lessons. Ochoa also learned something from his pupils—from Humberto Ortega and also from the Sandinistas' sinisterly talented Interior Minister, Tomas Borge.

The Sandinista chieftains, all their Marxist ideology notwithstanding, were typical Latin American military bosses. As such they had to be able to reward their immediate followers—with foodstuffs, cars, cash, visas, airplane tickets, medicines, electrical appliances, cigarettes, clothes. These things are normal articles of everyday commerce in a market economy. But in an economy of both planned and anarchic scarcity, such as in Nicaragua (and Cuba), selective abundance is the ultimate weapon of political power. These Sandinista military chiefs could say to their followers: "The Revolution cannot give it to you, but I can—if you obey all my orders and are unfailingly loyal to me personally."

It was from the Sandinistas that Ochoa discovered how to accumulate the dollars necessary for dispensing such patronage and playing this game. Later he made use of his new business skills while serving in Angola, where he became heavily involved in the sale of diamonds, zinc, marble, radio sets, valuable hardwoods, art objects, high-quality foodstuffs, even arms.

BEFORE Ochoa's arrival in Nicaragua, the Cuban officials operating there belonged to the Special Forces of the Ministry of Interior, at that time under the command of Patricio de la Guardia, with a little informal help from his brother Tony. Without doubt, the Special Forces were Fidel's favorites: their responsibilities included providing security for the Commander in Chief's private plane and his personal yacht. Their military base in Havana Bay had the best facilities, including a gymnasium which boasted—in the words of one of its long-time visitors—"everything an American gymnasium has." There was also a dining room which was—again according to this witness—"a perfect replica of the same thing in the United States." The Special Forces also enjoyed standing reservations at the best restaurants and night clubs in Havana and had an inexhaustible supply of Cohiba and Montecristo cigars. In the people's paradise of Cuba, these perks constituted the lifestyle of the rich and famous.

In Havana, Tony de la Guardia played racket-ball with Fidel's son, and lived in a house in the seaside

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

municipality of La Playa, the furnishings of whose three principal rooms came from three different countries. Tony was driven to work in a Russian Lada with a Sony music system, which often blared Frank Sinatra recordings. On holidays, he would take off on his own into the Havana streets behind the wheel of an MG sports car, a Colt .45 strapped to his waist.

In those happy days, nobody imagined—nobody could have imagined—Ochoa and Tony ending up facing the same firing squad.

ONE Sunday morning—just two weeks after the decision to jail Ochoa—the Court of Honor, composed of 47 Cuban generals and vice-admirals, gathered to decide his fate. As usual, Raúl was the first to speak, and he proceeded to unleash a stream of charges against the "unrestrained populism that characterized Ochoa's actions in the last few months. . . . On the strength of his business card he was showering gifts and valuable objects to the four winds, but principally to officers, contrary to all established regulations, in a delirious exercise of self-satisfaction, with a view, evidently, to creating an image and special ties of gratitude to his person."

This was the one thing that Raúl and Fidel could not tolerate. Nobody in the country needed to be told why. In Cuba only Fidel has the right to confer the precious Rolex watches, the cars, the houses, the trips abroad. If some general decides to distribute similar booty, he must do so only in the name of the Supreme Leader. Otherwise, such "spontaneous" generosity becomes high treason—because it competes with Fidel's power.

But after accusing Ochoa of "unheard-of disloyalty to our Commander in Chief," Raúl—his voice acquiring a markedly threatening tone—asked him to consider the future of his three children, and "leave them a worthy legacy of self-criticism and of mature reflection, which will allow them to understand the unequivocal correctness of the decisions of this court and of the military court that will decide his fate."

THE following day, Monday, June 26, it was Tony de la Guardia's turn to testify. He said that Ochoa had realized the possibilities of drug trafficking while he was serving in Nicaragua. He referred to nineteen different operations between 1987 and 1988, of which fifteen had proved successful, transshipping six tons of cocaine through Cuba to the United States and producing a profit of three-and-a-half million dollars. He provided details—how the launches entered the country through Varadero beach and how the Cuban Coast Guard drew up next to the launch as if it were engaged in a normal act of commerce. And he told of meeting with Ochoa in Angola, where he went to visit his brother Patricio. There the topic of discussion was the disastrous state of the Cuban economy and how the two could assure themselves of earnings between two or three billion dollars in a six-month period, if drug laboratories could be built and major shipments made in Cuba.

How much, if any, of this is true? Probably Tony de la Guardia *was* involved in drug trafficking, and possibly Ochoa was guilty, too. But if so, it is impossible to believe that in a country as tightly controlled as Cuba, drug trafficking on this scale could have gone on without authorization from the Commander in Chief himself. And it is also impossible to believe that drugs were the real reason for the purge of Ochoa.

In any case, that same Monday, the Court of Honor recommended that Ochoa be placed "at the disposition of the Special Military Court, to face charges of high treason to the fatherland." When these deliberations were concluded, Ochoa was allowed to address a few words to his old companions-in-arms. He limited himself to saying that he continued to be "at the service of the Revolution, and if this same cause which I have served should condemn me to death, I promise that my last thoughts will be for Fidel." Stalin could not have scripted a better courtroom scene. When Fidel learned of Ochoa's promise, he referred to his now-disgraced associate as a courageous man. As Raúl had played with Ochoa's children's future in order to get him to humiliate himself before the court, now Fidel dangled before Ochoa the possibility that his life might be spared at the last moment.

To no avail. On July 4, at 6 P.M., the Special Military Court asked for the death penalty for Ochoa, Tony de la Guardia, and two others (with jail sentences for the remaining ten), and then, by unanimous vote, the Cuban Council of State decided not to commute a single one of the death sentences.

On Thursday, July 13, *Granma* published a very tiny news item: "The sentence of the Special Military Court has been carried out in the cases of Ochoa, Martinez, La Guardia, and Amado Padron." The rumor in Havana is that they were executed in the dawn breezes; that they were required to kneel down and face the wall, rather than the firing squad; that they were executed in the very same spot in the La Cabana fortress where the first victim of the old Batista regime in Havana—Captain Pedro Morejon Valdes—fell to the bullets of the victorious Revolution on January 31, 1959.

With these fresh executions, the historical circle of the Cuban Revolution has been closed: yesterday it was Batistianos, today it is the children of Fidel. (I cannot help wondering what Ochoa asked himself as he knelt with his back to the firing squad in those dawn breezes. Did he really think of Fidel—if only to curse him eternally?)

The day after the shootings, five generals from the Ministry of Interior were replaced by seven generals from the Ministry of the Armed Forces loyal to Raúl, who is now firmly positioned to take power when Fidel, against his own expectations, proves to be mortal after all.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Turning of the Critical Tide?

Carol Iannone

A MAJOR strategy in the current assault on the integrity of art from within the literary world has been the denial of the possibility of transcendence. Any claim that a writer can speak beyond his particular historical circumstances to describe the human experience as lived by all men is considered spurious. What has been seen as the universal truth of literature, we are told, is nothing more than the disguised or unexamined assumptions of the ruling class, sex, and race.

In no way have those making such accusations actually proved them. Do blacks, for example, find unrecognizable the mournful despair of the Trojan people at the death of Hector? Are women incapable of appreciating the restless dissatisfaction that drives Ishmael to join a whaling expedition? Is it beyond the capacity of a person born into the working class to fathom the overreaching ambitions of Macbeth? Of course not—in fact, such suggestions are *truly* "racist," "sexist," and "classist."

Yet the notion that all literature is ideological has enabled its purveyors to clear the way for their own authentically political approaches, entirely relieved of the burden of aesthetic justification. A whole academic/intellectual industry is now thriving on the infusion of politics into literature, much as some people claim whole industries thrive on the manufacture of chemicals that pollute the environment and contaminate the food supply.

Since it seems impossible to make the regnant literary power brokers admit that Shakespeare can be meaningful to anyone other than white males, perhaps the question can be explored profitably from the other end. What is the response nowadays to literature that is *openly* ideological and how powerful a hold does ideologically based literature have on our cultural life? The careers of Alice Walker and Marge Piercy, both of whom are explicitly political writers, and whose latest novels--Miss Walker's third, *The Temple of My Familiar,** and Miss Piercy's tenth, *Summer People*†—were published last spring, conveniently lend themselves to an exploration of these questions.

Alice Walker writes as a militant black and an equally militant feminist, while Marge Piercy's novels practically seem to have been produced on commission from some invisible authority on the Left. Unlike such novels as Henry James's *The Bostonians* or Dostoevsky's *The Possessed,* which use politics as a backdrop or a political movement as a subject for fictional exploration, the fiction of Miss Walker and even more that of Miss Piercy is the continuation of politics by other means, often a chance to accomplish in art what their favorite movements have failed thus far to achieve in life.

As one critic has written rather grandiloquently of Marge Piercy: "Her real genre is didactic and visionary allegory, . . . she wants her novels 'to be of use' " (the title of one of her books of poetry). In *Small Changes* (1974), for example, this critic continues, Miss Piercy "concentrates upon the creation of a new sexuality and a new psychology, which will permeate and bind a broad, genuine equality." And another critic has noted that Alice Walker's *Meridian* (1976) "at times seems to be floating straight to Heaven. The book tries to make itself into a parable—more than a mere novel."

In looking over the critical reception these two writers have been accorded over the years, we find that the political propagandizing they both do has rarely stood in the way of the accolades they have generally received.

To be sure, some critics apparently see no conflict between the political and the aesthetic dimensions and therefore have no obstacle to overcome in singing the praises of these writers. Thus, according to one reviewer, Marge Piercy, in *Dance the Eagle to Sleep* (1970)—summarized by this reviewer as "the story of some not too distant time in which a small army of youth, drawn together by mutual feelings of alienation and hostility toward an oppressive, demoralized System, declare themselves a nation apart"—gives "fabulous substance to the essential Myth of the Movement."

Yet with a rare exception like John Updike (for whom *Dance the Eagle to Sleep* "fails as a novel of ideas" because "the government becomes one of those almost omnipotent syndicates of evil that Superman did battle with"), even reviewers who recognize that there is a conflict between the aesthetic and the political have tended to insist that Miss Piercy "doesn't allow ideology to overpower the thrust of her narrative," or that her "fierce energy as a novelist redeems the rhetoric."

Indeed, even critics who fully perceive and object to the programmatic quality of Miss Piercy's politics have usually still managed a general endorsement. "The men are monsterized," said a reviewer of *Small Changes.* "Women are made to seem happier without [them].

CAROL IANNONE *teaches writing and literature at NYU's Gallatin Division and is managing editor of* Academic Questions.

* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 416 pp., $19.95.

† Summit Books, 380 pp., $19.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Children raised in communes are more emotionally secure. Lesbian love is more satisfying than heterosexual love. The end is a propagandist's one rather than a novelist's." Nevertheless, this same reviewer pronounced the novel "engrossing," "absorbing," and "fun."

ALICE WALKER, too, has been the beneficiary of this kind of apologia. In particular, several reviewers of her celebrated *The Color Purple* (1982) acknowledged that men in that novel "are generally pathetic, weak, and stupid, when they are not heartlessly cruel, and the white race is universally bumbling and inept," but these flaws did not prevent them from declaring it "an American novel of permanent importance."

Of all the positive reviewers of *The Color Purple*, Robert Towers in the *New York Review of Books* was probably the most sweeping in his analysis of the book's failures. About its sexual politics, he had no illusions:

> The bonding of oppressed women is obviously a major concern of the novel. . . . Though capable of murderous jealousy, the women on the whole support each other warmly and band together against the common enemy: man. The humor, heroism, and endurance of the women are constantly extolled—and contrasted with the foolishness, selfishness, and, often, the sheer brutality of the male sex. One is hard put to find, either in *Meridian* or *The Color Purple*, a male character presented in really positive terms; in the latter novel only the few white characters (of both sexes) are depicted as negatively as the black men.

Furthermore, Towers noted "certain improbabilities": it was unlikely that Celie, the poorly educated main character, "would have applied the word 'amazon' to a group of feisty sisters." (There are other such infelicities in the text.) Nor was Towers convinced by the TV miniseries touch in which Celie, in the 1930's, finds "fulfillment in designing and making pants for women."

Going on to detail even "more serious faults" in *The Color Purple* "than its possible [*sic*] feminist bias," Towers wrote:

> Alice Walker still has a lot to learn about plotting and structuring what is clearly intended to be a realistic novel. The revelations involving the fate of Celie's lost babies and the identity of her real father seem crudely contrived—the stuff of melodrama or fairy tales.

Moreover, Towers felt that the

> extended account of Nettie's experience in Africa [conveyed in her letters to Celie] . . . lacks authenticity . . . because Walker has failed to endow Nettie with her own distinctive voice. . . . The failure to find an interesting idiom for a major figure like Nettie is especially damaging in an epistolary novel, which is at best a difficult genre for a 20th-century writer.

In the end, however, Towers undercut his own astute judgment. All these "inadequacies" were, he said, "relatively insignificant."

For Towers, and for many other critics as well, the redemptive quality of *The Color Purple* was the voice of Celie herself, rendered in a thick, pungent, juicy black dialect as she writes the letters to God and her sister that constitute much of the book. In Celie's letters, Alice Walker, said Towers, had transformed

> a subliterate dialect into a medium of remarkable expressiveness, color, and poignancy. . . . I can think of no other novelist who has so successfully tapped the poetic resources of [black English].

One cannot help thinking that the reason critics managed to applaud *The Color Purple* in the teeth of so many flaws was itself political—the necessity to welcome the voice of a poor black woman, and a lesbian at that, into the mainstream of contemporary literature. As Miss Walker herself has put it, "Not enough credit has been given to the black woman who has been oppressed beyond recognition."

The response to *The Color Purple*, then, can well be seen as a kind of literary affirmative action. Indeed, this novel has become a staple of literature courses around the country and one professor at Pennsylvania State University hazarded a guess that it may be assigned more often in college courses than all of Shakespeare's plays combined. (At Kenyon College one semester it was read in three different courses in three different departments.) It is worth noting, too, that the novel is assigned not only in literature courses but sometimes in sociology and history courses as well, as a depiction of black life.

WITH all this critical reverence and affection, one might have thought that Alice Walker's reputation was unassailable, and yet the reception of her latest novel, *The Temple of My Familiar*, has been quite stringent. Largely through the character of Lissie, a woman who has been incarnated hundreds of times, Miss Walker tells, in one critic's exasperated enumeration,

> not only the history of Africa [but] also the history of the world, the transmigration of souls, the violence done by white civilization to black, man's cruelty to man, man's cruelty to woman, woman's cruelty to woman (before she freed herself of man), man's cruelty to animals, and man's cruelty to the whole round globe.

Critics have complained about Miss Walker's "ideological tendentiousness"—"sweeping race and gender overgeneralizations, oversimplified indictments of colonialism, genocidal conspiracy theories, the implication that mankind taught animals to kill"—as well as her "smug," even "hateful" "self-righteous assurance," and her "ineffable egotism."

Critics are beginning, moreover, to ask questions about her use of history ("Is it, for instance, true that the white colonial powers driven out of Africa have tried to undermine the liberated countries by flooding them with pornography?"). Even a critic willing to admit that history "is by and large a story made up by white males" cannot manage the distance to Miss Walker's inversion of male-dominated, Eurocentric culture ("In Alice Walker's counter-myth, Africa is the cradle of true religion and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

civilization, and man a funny, misbegotten creature with no breasts and an elongated clitoris"). In short, this critic has remarked: "There are certain brute realities that cannot be willfully ignored. Africa has a past that neither the white male historian nor Miss Walker can simply invent."

Alice Walker's inability to create plot and structure effectively is also beginning to provoke, as is the forced quality of her happily-ever-after endings and reconciliations:

> No doubt the world would be a better place if, like [the main characters] Fanny and Suwelo, we could live in bird-shaped houses and devote ourselves to breadmaking and massage and generally adopt Fanny's mother's gospel: "We are all of us *in heaven* already!"

"I think for white men in particular, it would be hard *not* to ridicule" *The Temple of My Familiar,* Miss Walker has said in response to such criticisms. Notwithstanding this original defense, the simplest explanation for the turn on Alice Walker is of course the book itself, which is everything its detractors make of it and less. Still, the monumental arrogance it took to present such a sorry sack of silliness to the public must at least partly have been nurtured on the fawning reception of *The Color Purple*—which might suggest that overpraise for black and women writers does a disservice to them as artists even before it does any damage to the culture at large.

But again one wonders if there may not be a deeper level to the near-universal critical repudiation of *The Temple of My Familiar* (which has not, however, prevented it from winding up on the best-seller lists). The vague, stringy, undisciplined story that Alice Walker sets at the center of this novel concerns a pair of middle-class blacks who teach college, have a troubled marriage, undergo therapies of different sorts, and seek more or less to find themselves. (Fanny teaches women's studies but poor Suwelo must teach history as the record of "What a few white men wanted, thought, and did." The college that forces him to teach in this way is the real mythical dimension of *The Temple of My Familiar.*) Could it be that when all is said and done, and despite Alice Walker's attempts to make it appear mythbound, exotic, and African, life in the American black middle class looks too boringly much like life in the white middle class to exert any special allure?

ALTHOUGH Marge Piercy's new novel, *Summer People,* has received some favorable attention, the bellwether New York *Times Book Review* indicates that patience with her may also be wearing thin.

Summer People tells of a blissfully happy ten-year *ménage à trois* made up of a married couple, Willie (a carpenter and sculptor) and Susan (a fabric designer), and a single woman, Dinah (an avant-garde composer). (The "sexist" implications of two women to one man never seem to occur to Miss Piercy.) The contented trio is broken up by the novel's course of events in which Susan allows herself to be infected/corrupted by Reaganist values like money, status, and glamor. Once Susan has conveniently removed herself by suicide, Dinah and Willie go on to form more traditional arrangements with even more conveniently available others, Dinah with a world-class violinist who not only gives her undying commitment and a baby, but also money, status, and glamor. (Not for nothing did one critic call an earlier Piercy novel "a Harlequin romance in a wolf coat of raised social consciousness.")

The *Times* reviewer "sympathizes with Marge Piercy's plight. She's the sort of radical feminist sage whose fiction and poetry flourished in the 1960's and early 70's, when her *épater le bourgeois* posture, and the ramshackle social architectures she proposed, fit the *Zeitgeist* more snugly." He went on to dismiss the novel for its soap-opera dimension, its willed quality, and its clumsy, theme-conscious prose—all of which have always characterized Marge Piercy's work, though rarely in the past to its detriment in the eyes of reviewers and critics.

IRONICALLY, both of these new novels can actually be seen to be moving, willy nilly, away from "alternative life-styles" toward more middle-class arrangements. Both authors firmly settle their characters in couples, male and female they settle them, two by two they settle them, albeit sometimes in the separate wings of bird-shaped houses. One can almost hear Bob Dylan rasping, for a change, *Everybody must go home!*

In their own convoluted ways, and for whatever reasons, Alice Walker and Marge Piercy may also be trying to come home, although most of the critics may be too bored to show up for the homecoming celebration, having already moved on to other preoccupations. If this is so, their careers help reveal the limits of ideology in more ways than one. For as the ideologies they subscribe to are increasingly exposed as empty and false, these writers too may find themselves looking for transcendence, possibly even in (somebody else's) fiction.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Who Scrubs the Tub?

THE SECOND SHIFT: WORKING PARENTS AND THE REVOLUTION AT HOME. By ARLIE HOCHSCHILD with ANNE MACHUNG. *Viking. 309 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by
CHARLOTTE LOW ALLEN

WHEN I first read about this book in a *Newsweek* report, I gasped, "That's us!" Arlie Hochschild, a sociology professor at the University of California at Berkeley, had spent eight years studying 50 two-career couples in the San Francisco Bay area, some working-class, some upper-middle-class, some academic like herself. She found that when each pair got home from work at the end of a long day, the wife alone began a "second shift," wrestling with a hot stove while her husband relaxed with a cold beer. In only 18 percent of households did husbands split the work 50-50 with their wives: most did anywhere from a third down to a token task like feeding the dog.

Mrs. Hochschild's findings were validated in an astonishing New York *Times* poll this last summer on the effects of twenty years of feminism on women's lives. In the overwhelming majority of families with working wives, as well as in those with wives not in the work force, it is the wife who does most of the cooking, the housecleaning, the shopping for food, the caring for children, and the paying of bills. Forty-eight percent of the women questioned said that women had to give up too much in return for the gains in job opportunities the women's movement had won for them. Only 25 percent thought that women's organizations had done anything to make their lives better.

How true it must be. My husband and I both have full-time jobs. Here is how we "divide" the labor at home: I buy the groceries, cook 90 percent of the meals, make the bed, water the plants, do all the laundry, and scrub down the bathroom once a week. My husband carries the groceries upstairs for me, empties the trash, washes maye half the dishes, and keeps us stocked with a superb selection of medium-priced wines and Canadian beer. Once a month, or perhaps once every two months, he methodically vacuums the floor, leaving not a speck of dust. And every Friday night he cooks spaghetti with a delicious garlic-and-basil sauce he invented himself. It is one of the two dishes he knows how to make. The other is chili.

This is an arrangement that Arlie Hochschild would find most unfair. My husband does not "share"—her verb for the man who puts in from 45 to 50 percent of the housework. This means I ought to have what she calls a "sharing showdown," in which I would walk out and refuse to return until my husband agreed to split the chores right down the middle. That is how Michael and Adrienne Sherman, two college professors who are the couple Arlie Hochschild admires most in her study, arrived at an egalitarian household. "Raised as a little king, Michael had never done housework before, but now in their modest apartment he did half," Mrs. Hochschild writes. "Adrienne felt much happier, and so now did Michael." There is much more in this book about the virtues of Michael, who, for instance, when Adrienne becomes pregnant, refers to "our pregnancy," and who never has to be reminded to clean up after dinner.

Mrs. Hochschild's hope is that one day we will become more like the Swedes, whose men are an improvement over American men rather in the way Swedish cars are better than American cars. Unfortunately she neglects to consider one thing—that men and women tend to have fundamentally different conceptions of the amount and the kind of "housework" necessary to keep a home functioning properly. Take the matter of making the bed. Here is my husband's philosophy: "Making the bed is a complete waste of time. A few hours later you get back in and mess it up again." Clean the bathroom? It too gets dirty again quickly, so why bother? But for me, a sparkling bathroom is one of those important small things that keeps your mind off the larger things that seldom get done, such as washing the windows. Similarly, I like regular changes of fresh sheets and towels, while my husband, when he was a bachelor, had a strict policy of never visiting a laundromat more than twice a year.

So, barring a sharing showdown, I can either clean the bathroom and change the sheets myself or start nagging my husband on Thursday in the hope that he might get the chore done by Sunday. And what if I forced my husband to do half the cooking? I love to cook myself, and I enjoy trying out new recipes and rotating dishes so that we never eat the same thing two nights in a row. If my husband cooked, we would have the same two things for dinner from now until the trumpet sounds.

In short, I am much more interested in my home than my husband is. And if he were like me, fussing over the towels and the napkin rings, I don't think I'd want him for a husband. Adrienne Sherman may love her Michael, but if he were mine I'd be tempted to run off with the Devil's Disciples. I am content to let my husband show his appreciation for the home I make him in other tangible and intangible ways. For one thing, although Mrs. Hochschild would not count it as housework, he contributes importantly to the stability of our household by managing our investments, a time-consuming task that he pursues with interest and agility. My complacency about our division of labor, moreover, is borne out by the New York *Times* poll, in which 61 percent of wives—the same wives who reported doing most of the housekeeping—main-

CHARLOTTE LOW ALLEN *is a senior editor at* Insight *magazine.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tained that their husbands were also doing their fair share.

THIS is not to say that Mrs. Hochschild has written an entirely bad or silly book. Aside from some occasional cant, she writes well and is a shrewd and honest observer. More importantly, by reading between the lines one can learn a great deal from her about American family life these days, including about the amazingly indulgent way many American children are currently raised. In one two-career family, the Holts, four-year-old Joey rivets down his parents' attention for three solid hours every night as they negotiate when and if he is going to bed.

One particularly fascinating feature of Mrs. Hochschild's subjects is that although most subscribe to egalitarian principles worthy of Saint-Juste, all but the poorest employ servants: housekeepers, babysitters, nannies, cleaning women, family therapists. The highest-income woman in her study, Jessica Stein, a lawyer married to another lawyer, the workaholic Seth Stein, has almost as many servants as a medieval chatelaine. In her household work Carmelita, the Salvadoran housekeeper; Filipa, Carmelita's sixteen-year-old daughter, who fills in for her mother while Carmelita works at a second housekeeping job elsewhere; Martha, an old high-school friend of Jessica's who shops for her, does her typing and bookkeeping, and drives the Steins' elder son, Victor, to classes; Bill, a college student who plays ball with little Victor, and Bill's sleepover girlfriend. "On Saturday afternoons," records Mrs. Hochschild, "Jessica wrote checks to pay Carmelita and Filipa; Martha; Bill; the gardener; and other occasional helpers such as plumbers, tree-trimmers, and tax accountants."

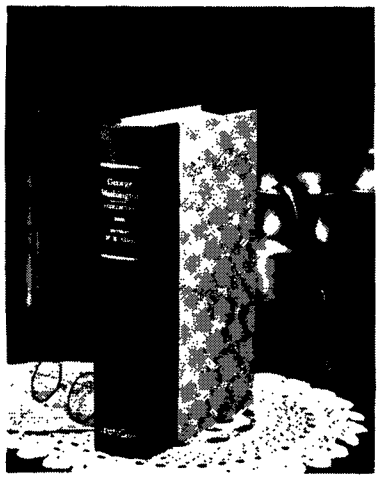
Half-buried in the book is still another interesting fact: few of Mrs. Hochschild's female subjects, mothers all, actually work a complete eight-hour "first shift" outside the home as a prelude to the second shift inside it. Most have tried the have-it-all life, but after a few years have thrown in the towel. Whether they are lawyers, academics, accountants, secretaries, or day-care workers, their participation in the cash economy is now strictly part-time. They have already figured out what feminists long insisted was not so: mothering is a demanding, and valuable, job in itself. Where only yesterday it was considered chic and fulfilling for upscale mothers to hire Swiss nannies for their babies or drop them off at day-care centers while they competed with men on the fast track, nowadays, in Mrs. Hochschild's book as in life, the only women who work full time while raising children are those driven by sheer economic necessity: no father in the home, or a father whose earnings alone cannot provide a decent standard of living.

Some, like Jessica Stein, who has a twenty-five-hour-a-week family-law practice, have turned even their second shift into a part-time job, with most of the child care taken care of by a staff. "I think I didn't

LibertyPress/LibertyClassics

GEORGE WASHINGTON: A COLLECTION
Compiled and Edited by William B. Allen

April 1989 marks the bicentennial of George Washington's presidency, yet this is the only one-volume compilation of his writings in print. Washington must now be acknowledged as a man of considerable political insight.



"George Washington: A Collection is an important addition to the literature on the American Revolution. The book provides a splendid introduction to Washington and his political beliefs, to the events of the Revolution through which he lived, and to the eighteenth-century world." — *Pauline Maier, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

"Professor Allen's choices are excellent and should enable the reader to gain insight into Washington's political thought and his ideas about American liberty and the republic. It is a fine volume." — *Robert Middlekauff, The Huntington Library*

743 pages. Printed throughout in two colors with 15 illustrations.

Hardcover $26.00 0-86597-059-9
Paperback $ 9.50 0-86597-060-2
Liberty Fund edition, 1988

Please send me: *George Washington: A Collection*
Liberty Fund edition, 1988

Quan.		Price	Amount
	Hardcover	$26.00	
	Paperback	9.50	
		Subtotal	
		Indiana residents add 5% sales tax	
		Total	

We pay book rate postage. Please allow approximately 4 weeks for delivery. All orders must be prepaid in U.S. dollars.

☐ Enclosed is my check or money order made payable to Liberty Fund, Inc.

☐ Please send me a copy of your latest catalogue.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Mail to: Liberty Fund, Inc.
7440 North Shadeland Ave.
Department X104
Indianapolis, IN 46250

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

look hard enough for a housekeeper that would really talk to the kids when they got home, would be sure they remembered their sweaters or their permission slips from school, would remember birthday parties or to sign the children up for field trips so that they're not late—like Victor was this morning," she tells Mrs. Hochschild. Once a week Jessica flies to Seattle for an overnight mini-vacation of shopping, lunching with friends, and visiting her favorite psychiatrist. Although she complains that Seth's inattentiveness at home is what prevents her from pursuing her legal career more aggressively, in fact she has plenty of leisure, more than most full-time housewives in lower socioeconomic groups. She has simply decided to devote her ample free time to recreation.

WHAT then is the point of Mrs. Hochschild's book? Almost every middle-class mother she interviewed has already figured out that two shifts are one shift too many. As for women who cannot afford to abandon their full-time jobs, Mrs. Hochschild's own evidence provides the basis of an excellent argument in favor of "pro-family" government policies such as tax breaks or even cash subsidies for working families with children in order to relieve the crushing economic burdens which many low- and moderate-income women and their husbands currently bear.

But allowing women to spend more time at home is not, of course, on Mrs. Hochschild's agenda. Her goal instead is to force *men* to spend more time at home—or rather, to do the housework of women. She wants "the government and society" to "shape a new gender strategy" in which men, presumably, would learn to love scrubbing the tub and crocheting Granny squares. This is actually not so much a formula for equality of the sexes as for letting one sex dominate by defining the other's domestic duties.

In the old feminist ideology, housework was supposed to be so demeaning, so disgusting, so trivial, so boring, that it would be only fair to make men do half of it. "Second-generation" feminists like Mrs. Hochschild appear to be making the opposite argument: housework (and child-rearing) is so important and valuable that men should not be allowed to miss it. But Mrs. Hochschild does not really believe this. Echoing earlier feminists, she describes traditional domestic life in faintly snide language: "a culture of homemade apple pie, home-sewn Halloween costumes, hand-ironed shirts." Like the feminists of old, she measures the value of woman's work strictly by what she is paid in the marketplace.

It used to be said that it takes a woman's hand and heart to make a house a home. The saying went out of fashion thirty years ago with the women's-liberation movement. Women now feel obliged for all their working lives to lie down on the Procrustean bed of a man's long, often tedious and stressful work day. When they come home, however, they have a choice: they can lie down for a second shift on the Procrustean bed of a man's idea of how to eat (out of a can) and how to sleep (on last week's sheets); or they can have a sharing showdown and try to force their man to act like a woman around the house; or they can try to make the place comfortable and attractive on their own terms. Or they can even follow the example of several lucky women I know, some with children, some without, who have quietly and contentedly sneaked all the way off the first shift.

The Rise of Solidarity

MAD DREAMS, SAVING GRACES: POLAND: A NATION IN CONSPIRACY. By MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN. *Random House. 267 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by ARCH PUDDINGTON

MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN was Warsaw correspondent for the New York *Times* for three-and-a-half years during the mid-1980's, a period which, by Kaufman's account, was devoid of big news events. This was, nevertheless, a crucial time in modern Polish history. For it was during these years that a broad opposition movement became firmly, even irreversibly, implanted, an astonishing development given the country's recent experience with martial law. At the same time, Poland's Communist party, which had ruled in typical monolithic fashion since the end of World War II, grew progressively weaker, to the point where it was no longer capable of controlling its independent-minded society. Although Kaufman was reassigned several years before the party's recent, abject collapse, he has written an intelligent account of the events, personalities, and forces which have combined to bring about the replacement of Communist rule by a broad coalition dominated by the Solidarity movement, the first such Communist setback in postwar Eastern Europe.

Kaufman arrived in Poland during the winding down of martial law, which had been imposed in December 1981 allegedly at the insistence of the Soviet Union. Martial law, or, in the literal Polish translation, "state of war," was widely seen in the West as having dealt Solidarity a mortal blow. Yet even though the regime had seized and interned some 10,000 opposition figures, including Lech Walesa, it failed even then to eliminate Solidarity from Polish political life. Several of the more important leaders of the free trade union had evaded the initial dragnet; safely hidden from the authorities, these men quickly organized a resistance movement dedicated to subverting the martial-law regime.

By the time Kaufman came on the scene, what began as a loosely coordinated resistance had coalesced into a broad underground society, complete with its own economy, educational system, and, most importantly, communications media in the form of literally hundreds of newspapers and bulletins. A culture of resistance penetrated throughout Polish society, influencing everything from children's games (Solidarity-versus-ZOMO-riot-police instead of cops-

---

ARCH PUDDINGTON *works for Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty in New York. He is the author of* Failed Utopias: Methods of Coercion in Communist Regimes, *published this year by ICS Press.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and-robbers) to the party's ritual May Day parades, often interrupted by banner-waving Solidarity partisans. Those Solidarity figures who managed to elude the security forces, like Zbigniew Bujak, became legends to the Polish public, perceived as symbols of national resistance to oppressive, foreign-dominated rule much like the fighters of the Warsaw uprising in an earlier era.

Poland, in other words, could no longer be described as a totalitarian society. True, the regime of General Wojciech Jaruzelski remained in firm command of the instruments of control and coercion. Police presence, moreover, was highly visible, and the huge police-security apparatus, which by some reckoning constituted as much as one-seventh of the Communist-party membership, loomed in the background as a potential independent political force driven by a visceral hatred of Solidarity, intellectuals, and reform. But the combination of martial law (during which military rule partially supplanted party rule), economic deterioration, and the unremitting anti-Communism of the Polish people had weakened the party to the point where it could no longer control people's actions or thoughts through the subtle, nonviolent manipulation of rewards and sanctions preferred by post-Stalinist regimes. Telling evidence of the party's disintegration was the fact that fewer than 1 percent of its members were under twenty-four years of age, while fully 36 percent were over fifty. At the same time, the proportion of workers and peasants had dwindled dramatically, replaced by a large influx of officials and bureaucrats. Far from standing as the militant representative of the masses, the Polish Communist party had degenerated into an instrument of and for the functionaries of the party-state.

Yet unlike Hungary's Communist leadership, which has responded with shrewdness and flexibility in its dealings with the democratic opposition, Poland's Communists offered the most grudging concessions only under conditions of extreme duress. When Kaufman made a brief return visit after a renewed wave of strikes in 1988, a high party official allowed that the authorities were "condemned to negotiate" with Solidarity, a choice of words which says a great deal about the party's attitude to the rest of society. In another episode illuminating the regime's efforts to defame and subvert the opposition, Kaufman tells of being summoned for an interview by Wieslaw Gornicki, a spokesman for General Jaruzelski. The purpose of the meeting was to inform Kaufman, a Jew, of the disgraceful behavior of Wojciech Lamentowicz, a sociologist with oppositionist views, during the anti-Semitic campaign of 1968, when the majority of Poland's already small Jewish community was purged and hounded from the country. On checking with Lamentowicz and others, Kaufman concluded that the story was an outright fabrication; Lamentowicz had in fact acted decently during

NEW FROM LibertyPress

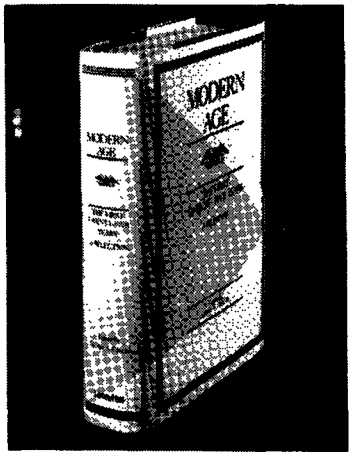
MODERN AGE: THE FIRST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

A SELECTION

Edited by George A. Panichas

These seventy-eight essays present the richness and diversity of recent conservative scholarship. This indispensable sourcebook tackles the pressing problems in American society and the modern world.

Modern Age was founded in 1957 by Russell Kirk, with Henry Regnery and David S. Collier. Most of the major conservative thinkers and themes of the last three decades are represented in nine sections, including the "Roots of American Order"; "Law, Legislation and Liberty"; and "Not for Marx."



894 + xx pages. Foreword, editor's note.

Hardcover $33.00 0-86597-061-0

Paperback $11.00 0-86597-062-9

Prepayment is required on all orders not for resale. We pay book rate postage on prepaid orders. Please allow approximately 4 weeks for delivery. *All* orders from outside the United States *must* be prepaid *in U.S. dollars*. To order, or for a copy of our catalogue, write:

LibertyPress/LibertyClassics
7440 N. Shadeland Avenue, Dept. Y 104
Indianapolis, IN 46250

Please send me: *Modern Age: The First Twenty-Five Years*

☐ Enclosed is my check or money order made payable to Liberty Fund, Inc.

☐ Please send me a copy of your latest catalogue.

Quantity Ordered		Price	Amount
	Hardcover	$33.00	
	Paperback	11.00	
		Subtotal	
	Indiana residents add 5% sales tax		
		TOTAL	

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Mail to: Liberty Fund, Inc.
7440 N. Shadeland Avenue
Dept. Y 104
Indianapolis, IN 46250

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LEGACY OF SILENCE
Encounters with Children of the Third Reich
Dan Bar-On

In this extraordinary book, Israeli psychologist Dan Bar-On presents the living testimony of men and women whose fathers served in the Nazi elite—the voices of those who experience Nazi Germany not merely as a relic of the political past but as an ever-present personal legacy. They provide rare glimpses of family life in the Third Reich while shedding disturbing new light on the Nazi legacy in contemporary Germany.

"[Bar-On's] questions are pertinent, his analysis lucid and often frightening. The reader follows him almost to the edge of an invisible abyss."
—Elie Wiesel

$25.00 cloth

RACIAL HYGIENE
Medicine under the Nazis
Robert N. Proctor
"Proctor's carefully argued book not only forces us to reassess the dynamics of Nazism but also challenges pervasive notions about the political neutrality and objective value of science and the moral innocence of scientists...[A] provocative study."
—Mary Nolan,
New York Times Book Review
$14.95 paper

Harvard University Press
79 Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 495-2480

what stands as one of the shabbiest incidents in modern Polish history.

This was not to be the only occasion when Kaufman witnessed an attempt by the regime to manipulate the Jewish issue. He quotes an old Polish proverb, "In hard times, go to the Jew," referring to the periodic practice of Polish nobles and kings to turn to Jewish moneylenders for rescue. In a contemporary twist, the Communist leadership initiated a campaign to establish friendly relations with prominent Jews, especially American Jews, in order to enhance its image and win favors from governments that cared about the treatment of Jews. This strategy failed to impress Kaufman, who was particularly put off by the regime's eager efforts to depict Solidarity as a haven for anti-Semites. As Kaufman points out, the occasional anti-Semitic remark uttered by a Solidarity figure would bring immediate, unequivocal admonition from Lech Walesa and other union leaders. The Communist party, by contrast, never chastised those implicated in the 1968 anti-Jewish campaign and tolerated the existence of the Grunewald society, a transparently anti-Semitic forum, within its own ranks. Nor had the party ever apologized to or compensated those who had been the victims of 1968, among whom were a number of key Solidarity intellectuals.

Kaufman spends considerable time wrestling with the question of Polish anti-Semitism, and he acknowledges the deep and personal feelings of Jews in the West who believe that Poles are "uniquely and perpetually anti-Semitic." Ultimately, Kaufman reaches a more optimistic conclusion about Polish attitudes, largely due to his admiration for those within the democratic opposition who have forced Polish society to undertake a frank assessment of its anti-Semitic past. Nor does Kaufman have much sympathy for Western Jewish organizations which judge Poland exclusively on Jewish issues, a stance, he says, which can easily invite manipulation by the party.

KAUFMAN is not especially optimistic about Poland's future. He sees a stalemate between a party determined to protect its privileges and a society which is just as resolved to resist Communist rule. As in other Communist countries, the combination of an egalitarian ideology and the ruling elite's corruption has instilled an apathy toward work and a resistance to changes in the social structure of the kind that would be engendered by free-market reforms. Poles have developed an almost philosophical objection to hard work, not uncommon in societies which regard themselves as under foreign occupation. Meanwhile, polls conducted by the official public-opinion institute give evidence of a new and troubling attitude among the young: a willingness to consider violence against the authorities, something which the militantly nonviolent Solidarity has insistently counseled against. The frustrations afflicting the younger generation are summed up by a worker who related to Kaufman that for five years he had lived in a barracks-like hostel with five men, including a chronic alcoholic, sharing two rooms. Thanks to Communism, he seemed to be saying, even marriage had become an impossibility.

The question now facing Poland is whether the country's political impasse can be broken by the formation of a non-Communist government. As Kaufman makes clear, the obstacles remain daunting, particularly given the party's unremitting hostility to Solidarity and its inherent dishonesty in dealing with the Polish people. Nonetheless, a few promising signs can be discerned. Although the security presence remains formidable, and the Ministry of the Interior continues to be headed by a Communist, that minister, General Czeslaw Kiszczak, is also responsible for having weeded out the more thuggish police elements and has recently pledged to depoliticize the police. More crucial is whether the Polish people can overcome the psychological legacy of four decades of Communist rule, especially as reflected in the contradictory attitude of hating Communism while clinging to the hope that the state will resolve the problems of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

material life. Here too there is a glimmer of hope. Unlike the Communists, Solidarity has earned a measure of popular trust and has produced a group of leaders who not only want change but have realistic ideas about how change can be accomplished. By Kaufman's altogether credible account, Polish political life is today dominated by men and women of intelligence, courage, and high standards of personal integrity. This is no small achievement for a nation entering a period fraught with uncertainty and danger.

Faith & Interfaith

JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE: A JEWISH JUSTIFICATION. By DAVID NOVAK. *Oxford University Press. 194 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID SINGER

INTERFAITH discussions between Christians and Jews—in professional jargon, "the dialogue"—have hit upon hard times. The pace may be undiminished, but the élan that once characterized such discussions has clearly disappeared. A number of factors account for this. In part, it reflects the very success of the early phase of interfaith dialogue, which saw a wholesale revision of negative Christian teaching about Jews and Judaism; this achievement, coming with near lightning speed, left many of the participants feeling exhilarated but also seriously disoriented. Then again, once some of the major issues were resolved, others came to the fore that proved more intractable. To the Jewish side, in particular, the hostility expressed in many Christian quarters to Zionism and the state of Israel came as a bitter disappointment, while still another irritant was the question of the symbolic uses of the Holocaust, an issue that has emerged again in the imbroglio over the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz.

In *Jewish-Christian Dialogue: A Jewish Justification*, David Novak seeks to restore enthusiasm to the interfaith enterprise by establishing it on a fresh basis. Moving far beyond the usual rhetoric of brotherhood, he puts forward a "philosophically formulated theological *argument* for Jewish-Christian dialogue." That argument is strikingly original in a number of respects. And it is of no small interest that the person putting it forth is a traditional Jew, indeed the leading halakhic traditionalist of the Conservative movement. For until recently, such Jews—mainly in the Orthodox camp—have been strongly opposed to interfaith dialogue altogether.

As a traditional Jew, Novak speaks from a strong position of faith, and one that is, moreover, highly particularistic. Indeed, he labels as "inauthentic" all attempts to constitute interfaith dialogue on the basis of an easy universalism. Authentic dialogue, Novak maintains, is the "relationship of Jews and Christians, in which each one faces the other *from* a distinctive point of origin, one that always transcends the point of meeting *between* them." This precludes both "religious relativism" and "religious syncretism," the former because it makes the "authority of any particular revelation absurd," and the latter because it leads to ersatz theology and liturgy. At the same time, Novak stresses, interfaith dialogue cannot be mere disputation, it must be conducted in such a way that "each side can recognize itself" rather than appearing as a "phantom" of the other's projection.

What is the aim of dialogue as Novak sees it? Here again his traditionalism is clearly evident. For Novak, the dialogue is both about faith and from faith. By the former I mean that he sees the agenda of interfaith dialogue as largely, if not exclusively, theological—the state of Israel is mentioned exactly once in *Jewish-Christian Dialogue*—while by the latter I mean that Novak sees dialogue as issuing in a religious united front opposed to the dominant secularism of our time.

This is the key innovative aspect of Novak's argument, and it reflects the powerful influence on his thinking of Richard John Neuhaus's *The Naked Public Square.*

DAVID SINGER *is director of Information and Research Services of the American Jewish Committee.*

Capture an Elephant.

New Elephant Paperbacks for Fall.

JOSEPH EPSTEIN
Ambition
The Secret Passion. A fascinating social history composed of sketches of eminent Americans together with a pointed reconsideration of the ingredients of the American Dream. "Should be must reading in executive suites as well as college classrooms."—*Forbes.* $8.95

LEONARD W. LEVY
Jefferson and Civil Liberties: The Darker Side
A distinguished constitutional historian finds Jefferson's record on civil liberties strikingly wanting in this most controversial analysis. "Blunt words and blunt facts...an indispensable book."—*Commentary.* $8.95

JAMES GOULD COZZENS
Castaway
A Novel. A modern parable of the Robinson Crusoe tale, one with powerful implications for the survival of modern man. "An interesting and distinguished piece of work."—*London Times Literary Supplement.* $6.95

BERNARD STERNSHER, EDITOR
Hitting Home
The Great Depression in Town and Country. Revised Edition. What it was like at the grass roots in cities and towns and on farms throughout the country, described in compelling historical articles. "A real breakthrough in our understanding of the depression."—Alfred B. Rollins, Jr. $9.95

AILEEN S. KRADITOR
Means and Ends in American Abolitionism
The debate over strategy and tactics among those who sought to abolish slavery raised many questions that still perplex us. "Lucid, important, brilliantly successful...a fruitful exploration into the history of a great movement."—Harold M. Hyman, *Book World.* $9.95

Ivan R. Dee, Inc.
Publisher
1332 North Halsted Street, Chicago 60622. At your bookseller, or order toll free by calling 1-800-634-0226. Major credit cards accepted. Complete catalog upon request.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Novak approvingly quotes the Reform theologian Rabbi Jakob Petuchowski on this point: "Neither Jews nor Christians can really afford to be isolationists. In this pagan world of ours, we together are the minority 'people of God.' " And it is precisely here that Novak takes issue with the traditionalist Jewish opponents of interfaith dialogue, ranging from ultra-Orthodox figures who manifest a visceral dislike of Gentiles to Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, the leading modern Orthodox thinker, who has made the case against dialogue in broad philosophical-theological terms.

The common error of such people, Novak argues, is the failure to appreciate the source of the main challenge to Judaism today: it is not (a greatly weakened) Christianity but "secularist absolutism." As he puts it in responding to Soloveitchik's argument that Jews and Christians should talk about everything *but* matters of faith:

> When these metaphysical or theological concerns are purposely bracketed, secularist criteria of human nature and society must inevitably become the basis of common discussion. . . . We have already seen in our own society how secularist criteria yield values that cannot be accepted by either faithful Jews or faithful Christians in such areas as life and death, the role of the family, crime and punishment. . . . If the theological . . . foundations of these values and the norms they justify are to be kept hidden, then the only justification left will be a secularist one.

Novak's traditionalism shows itself yet again in his respectful attention to models from the past. The aim here is not to come up with a binding precedent for dialogue—given our radically new historical situation, that is impossible—but rather to uncover a "tendency." On this basis, Novak offers a fascinating *tour d'horizon* of Jewish legal and theological perspectives on Christianity, from the biblical foundation of the seven "Noahide" Laws through a discussion of such matters as "The Status of Christianity in Medieval European Halakhah" to, in the modern era, "The Quest for the Jewish Jesus" and Franz Rosenzweig's dual-covenant theory.

WHILE Novak is eager to draw from the well of Jewish experience, in the end he articulates an original position of his own. For Novak, religious tolerance—and that, at best, is what the traditional sources affirm—is nothing more than "covert triumphalism." What is needed instead, as we have seen, is an "understanding of the other community that the other community [can] accept about itself." With this in mind, Novak formulates a theory of the "singular and the general." As he writes in summarizing his position:

> One can see Judaism and Christianity . . . as acknowledging a realm of possibility that is taken to be the human precondition for God's revelation to singular faith communities. And this realm of possibility can be constituted as the border they share. . . .

Jewish-Christian Dialogue is a major statement, and one that can contribute significantly to the revitalization of the dialogue process. Novak has a clear sense of what that process should and should not be. His respect for the claims of faith extends not only to Judaism but to Christianity as well; indeed, Novak's openness to the latter is nothing short of astonishing. And while his call for a religious united front in opposition to the dominant secularism of the day is likely to put off some readers, there is no gainsaying that he has put his finger here on a vitally important issue.

The one serious flaw in Novak's scheme is that it allows little if any place for a concern with Zionism and Israel as part of the agenda of dialogue. Novak, to be sure, might argue that there are other vehicles and avenues for addressing this issue, and that it need not form a part of the dialogue process itself. But

ISRAEL & THE WORLD AFTER 40 YEARS
AARON S. KLIEMAN

"Dr. Klieman explains in a clear and concise manner many points which I am sure had previously puzzled students of Israel's history. I congratulate him."
DAVID KIMCHE
Former Director-General
Israel Foreign Ministry

"In his wonderfully lucid style, Klieman takes us on a journey through Israel's history in the international arena . . . . This book abounds with insights and intelligence."
JOEL S. MIGDAL
Professor and Chair
International Studies Program
University of Washington

November Hardcover ISBN: 0-08-034942-0 283 pp. **$24.95**

CHARIOTS OF THE DESERT: The Story of the Israeli Armoured Corps DAVID ESHEL

The story of the Israeli Armoured Corps, without whose heroic feats, Israel would surely not have survived. The author combines his own personal experiences with those of his comrades in arms and historical facts to relay a story of unquenchable courage and high achievement.

March ISBN: 0-08-036257-5 Hardcover 200 pp. **$27.00**

At bookstores now, or *call toll free* **(800) 257-5755.**

BRASSEY'S (US), Inc. A member of the Macmillan Publishing Group.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this will not do. If a fundamental condition of the dialogue is that "each side . . . recognize itself," without Israel contemporary Jews cannot but appear as strangers to themselves. The crucial fact is that Jews today—most especially in the Diaspora—relate to Israel in a religious way, and certainly as a source of ultimate meaning. (Three-fourths of American Jews indicate in surveys that the destruction of Israel "would be one of the greatest personal tragedies in my life.") This, of course, makes for a very complicated situation, since the state of Israel is a modern, secular entity. But it does not alter the fact that for vast numbers of contemporary Jews, Israel is the faith by which they sustain their Jewish lives.

Novak's failure to give due recognition to this fact is freighted with irony, since his own book offers eloquent testimony to the extraordinary impact the state of Israel has had on the outlook of contemporary Jews. Reading *Jewish-Christian Dialogue,* one cannot help being struck by Novak's sense of absolute confidence vis-à-vis the Christian majority, a confidence which in no way conflicts with his openness to Christianity but which, indeed, makes that openness possible.

As a Jew, Novak may belong to a numerical minority, but he shows no sign at all of being part of a psychological minority. Whence this surefootedness? It arises, I would argue, from the radiating influence of Zionist "normalization," which, among the other wonders it has performed, enables a Jew in the Disapora to enter into dialogue with Christians feeling that he has behind him as many "divisions"—spiritual and otherwise—as his interlocutor.

"The first and most important prerequisite of interfaith," Abraham Joshua Heschel once observed, "is faith." David Novak has faith in abundance: faith in Judaism as a religion and faith in the good will of believing Christians. Were he more attentive to the faith of contemporary Jews in the state of Israel, his brief for dialogue would be the stronger.

The Fall of Allende

MODERN CHILE, 1970-1989: A CRITICAL HISTORY. By MARK FALCOFF. *Transaction. 325 pp. $32.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID BROCK

"THE election of Salvador Allende as president of Chile in 1970 not only capped a long rise in the political fortunes of the Left in that country but also raised hopes for popular-front electoral triumphs elsewhere in the Americas and in Western Europe. Yet once in power, the Allende government found its policy initiatives thwarted by bourgeois opponents at home, who controlled the Chilean congress, and, more decisively, by foes abroad, including the Nixon White House, the CIA, and big American corporations and banks. These stopped short of nothing to remove Allende from office—bribing the Chilean opposition, organizing a blockade of public and private monies, covertly fomenting a military coup. They finally accomplished their aim in 1973, extinguishing the Chilean road to socialism in favor of the brutal authoritarian junta that today still rules the country."

Thus, in summary paraphrase, goes the standard account of modern Chilean history, virtually none of which is true, as Mark Falcoff shows in his persuasive and definitive history. Falcoff, a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, here reconstructs the rise and fall of Salvador Allende, and in so doing demonstrates how the myths surrounding that period continue to warp discussion not only of Chilean politics but also of the purposes and methods of American foreign policy.

The sources of the myths are several. Allende's election marked the first time an avowed Marxist had come to power by the ballot box in the Americas, and was thus universally regarded as a major victory for Communist internationalism—all the greater for having been opposed by the U.S. Then, the

DAVID BROCK *reviewed Gregory A. Fossedal's* The Democratic Imperative *in our July issue.*

Salmagundi

Fall 1989, no. 84

Tzvetan Todorov, Nationalism
Christopher Lasch, Harvard Class of '54
Leonard Michaels, A Holocaust "Survivor"
Robert Paul Wolff, A Liberal Education
Philippe Videlier, China's Youth

Winter 1990, no. 85

A Symposium on Kitsch:
Saul Friedlander
Irving Howe
Susan Sontag
Stanley Kauffmann
also,
Irving Howe, The Conduct of Criticism
John Lukacs, Simone Weil
Ihab Hassan, A Trip to Japan

To order send $20 for 10 issues with name and address to
SALMAGUNDI /Dept. C
Skidmore College
Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866
or charge to:
Mastercard
#_____
VISA
#_____
Exp. date_____
phone #____-____-_____
Name and address_____
_____
signature_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

INCHARDI

Novels by J. Inchardi
$20 each

Lines On The Death Of A Fisherman

Three Jews In A Tub

Dreamship

Yurros

A Paper Toy

Intercurse

Jehovah Mafioso

Saturn Maru

Drek Shlak

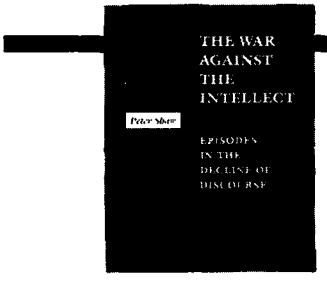
Om Budsman

The Execution Of Comrade X

The Resurrection Of Philippe D.

Order from **Sirius Books**
P.O. Box 177
Freeport, Maine 04032

THE WAR AGAINST THE INTELLECT



Episodes in the Decline of Discourse

Controversial and challenging, Peter Shaw's collection of essays on the decline of the humanities has been praised as "a noble effort to rectify some of the damage done by convoluted thinking" (*Washington Times*). Jacques Barzun says it "presents in a convincing manner a thesis of great importance . . . its qualities are many and rare in modern scholarship."

200 pages, $22.50 cloth, $10.95 paper
Available at bookstores everywhere or from
IOWA University of Iowa Press
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
VISA and MasterCard orders call 319-335-4645

fact that Allende's successor, Augusto Pinochet, was virulently anti-Communist and pro-U.S. imparted still deeper ideological significance to events there, ensuring that they would resonate far beyond Chile's borders.

Those events were set in motion by what Falcoff calls an accident of history. He argues, contrary to the conventional interpretation, that Allende's predecessor, the Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei, paradoxically set the stage for 1970 by boosting the strength not of the Chilean Left but of the Right. Since at least 1952, thanks to Chile's vigorous multi-party system, the Right, the Center, and the Left had held onto roughly equal segments of the electorate. The key to presidential elections was whether or not the Center and the Right were united. In 1964 they were, and Frei defeated Allende; by 1970, the emboldened Right had its own candidate, who beat the centrist Frei but finished just behind Allende. The latter won office with a plurality of only 36 percent of the vote (less than he achieved in 1964).

Allende's sweeping attempt to transform Chilean society was thus doomed from the start by the lack of a clear popular mandate. But Allende's predicament was even deeper than the election results suggest. The 36-percent vote for his Popular Unity party was itself the product of a fractious coalition, in which the Communists were considered a major component of the *moderate* wing. Lacking the dictatorial powers of a Fidel Castro, with no democratic majority in the public at large or in the Chilean congress, and fearing a plebiscite that might repudiate his plans to alter Chilean institutions along socialist lines, Allende attempted to introduce his program "through the back door" (as Falcoff puts it), in the hope of eventually building political support.

This strategy too was destined to fail; its inherent contradictions and ironies are described by Falcoff with satisfying precision. Allende set out to abolish large private property in agriculture; by 1973 he had succeeded in wiping out the landed aristocracy, unionizing the peasants, and guaranteeing them a uniform wage. The result was declining food production, which the government could no longer blame on the *latifundia*; nor could it countenance the obvious remedy, namely, wage incentives. In local elections in 1973, the peasants continued their historical pattern of voting for the Right.

A second major program, the transfer of large-scale industry into "social-property enterprises," also proved difficult to implement. There were both legal and political obstacles. The authority of the executive to acquire private properties was never firmly established, leading to a hodgepodge of temporary requisitions and interventions. In addition, as Falcoff writes, "here was a Marxist regime whose principal base was an industrial working class loyal to Communist and socialist trade unions." Over the years, these unions had pushed for high wage increases, especially from American companies. When, as in the case of the copper industry, the Chilean state became the owner, the union leadership found itself having to moderate its stance—but the workers had no intention of following suit. As Falcoff observes, "The one fundamental need of the regime in the industrial sector, to increase production at minimal cost, worked against the other equally basic requirement, to retain and even expand its support with the industrial working class." It achieved neither goal. Instead, industrial production fell *and* the opposition scored heavy gains among industrial laborers.

The sheer scale of the government's involvement in the economy "made the performance of the public sector an unavoidable determinant of the government's economic success." Yet Allende refused to compromise on his commitment to "irreversible" social change. Instead, he compromised on democratic procedures. As massive strikes gripped the country in response to the forced nationalization of small entrepreneurial concerns, as food shortages became common, and as pro- and anti-government rallies turned violent, Allende responded by inviting the armed forces into the government. (This is a move he may have been

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

contemplating all along: by 1973, the Chilean defense budget had doubled over 1970 levels, with most of the increase in salaries and perquisites.)

The Popular Unity party also moved to create a politically dependent judiciary, silence the press, inculcate the "values of socialist humanism" in public and private schools, and even to assassinate members of the opposition. Meanwhile, the revolutionary wing of the ruling coalition was importing tons of weaponry from the Soviet Union, East Germany, and Cuba in preparation for "armed popular power."

With the opposition unable to get a two-thirds vote in the congress for impeachment, and Allende lacking the power simply to shut down congress and rule by decree, the country fell into a dangerous political deadlock. At this juncture, Falcoff writes, the only alternatives were civil war and a military coup. The armed forces, upon whom Allende had been depending for his survival, reluctantly stepped in, "allowing [Allende] to pass into history as a martyr rather than a failure." (Falcoff sides with those who believe Allende died by his own hand during the coup.)

THE reputed role of the U.S. during these critical years helped in no small way to cement Allende's reputation as a martyr. Falcoff's conclusions here, based on a careful examination of documents produced in the mid-70's by hostile congressional investigators of U.S. covert-action programs, should finally put to rest the more fantastic theories still conjured up today by apologists for Allende.

What, then, did the U.S. do to show its displeasure at the prospect, and later the reality, of an Allende presidency? In the 1970 elections, after a series of fitful delays, the American government (which in 1964 had heavily bankrolled Frei's campaign) decided to support no particular candidate. In the closing days of the race, less than $1 million was appropriated to fund a "spoiling" campaign emphasizing the perils of a Popular Unity victory. Then, in the immediate aftermath of the election, the

TOTAL IMMERSION

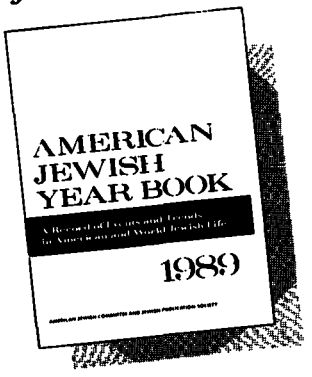
A Total Triumph for Allegra Goodman

"an altogether original talent...wise and witty...fresh and funny...Allegra Goodman defies comparison." — **Los Angeles Times** "Her stories are subtly crafted and subtly wise, infused with shrewd insight and wry, compassionate humor." — **Cleveland Plain Dealer** "Allegra Goodman is brilliant, funny, knowing, alive: a marvel. *All* the muse-fairies were present at her birth." — **Cynthia Ozick** "immensely engaging...an uncanny ear...hilarious..." — **Newsday** "dazzling...razor sharp...high comedy...Goodman reveals herself to be an accomplished artist...a thinking person's writer." — **Library Journal** "beautifully simple (yet intellectually complex)...She seems to be looking right into the minds of people." — **Honolulu Star-Bulletin and Advertiser** "exhilarating...concise but resonant." — **Publishers Weekly** "It's all there — the ridiculous and the serious...rooted in knowledge brought to life by affection." — **Max Apple** "sure, strong voice...wry yet sensitive...trenchant dialogue" — **Atlanta Constitution** "sharp-eyed, keen-witted, with a penchant for getting swiftly to the truth of things...a dazzling beginning." — **Chaim Potok** "the interesting Jewish bargain or edge in American fiction will be more and more in the keeping of writers like Cynthia Ozick...or younger ones like Allegra Goodman." — **The New York Times**

Half of the stories in *Total Immersion* (Harper and Row) first appeared in *Commentary*. Order from **Gee Tee Bee**, 11901 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049. 213/476-2622. $16.95 + 2.50 postage and handling (California residents please add appropriate tax).

"One of the best reference works in the United States and certainly the best in the field of Jewish affairs."
JACOB R. MARCUS, Director, American Jewish Archives

"Even a small Jewish library should include the American Jewish Year Book."
GERSON D. COHEN, Chancellor Emeritus
Jewish Theological Seminary



The standard, authoritative record of events and trends in Jewish life here and abroad

600 pp. **$28.50** prepaid

Order from:
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
165 East 56 Street, New York, NY 10022

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1989 EDITION

The Impact of Feminism on American Jewish Life
by Sylvia Barack Fishman
Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University

Recent Trends in American Judaism
by Jack Wertheimer
Department of History, Jewish Theological Seminary of America

Plus...reports on Israel and Jewish communal life around the world • Jewish demographics • directories of national organizations, federations, welfare funds, and community councils • list of periodicals • obituaries • Hebrew calendars

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

U.S. sought to prevent Allende's ascension. Toward that goal it followed two tracks. One was to convince oppositionists in the Chilean congress, where (because of the lack of an electoral majority) the race was to be decided, to support the candidate of the Right; the other was to convince Frei, still the incumbent president, either to resign in favor of a military cabinet or to spark a military putsch.

But the whole idea of destabilizing Allende was scuttled when these various plans proved counterproductive. Once he took office, although funds continued to flow to opposition political parties and media, they were scrupulously withheld from groups involved in strikes or violence. Meanwhile, U.S. government agencies, private U.S. banks, and international-development banks continued to transfer resources to the Allende government, if in reduced amounts, and record amounts of credit assistance and outright subsidies came from a variety of other sources.

Finally there is the question of direct U.S. involvement in the 1973 coup. About this Falcoff concludes pithily: "The CIA . . . was repeatedly reminded by headquarters that support for a coup was not authorized and in the final critical weeks of the regime directly distanced itself from officers known to favor a coup and to be actively discussing that option." To put the matter plainly, Allende himself brought on what was to follow.

UNFORTUNATELY, Falcoff devotes only a single, final chapter to the years 1973–89, and his discussion does not match the prodigious analysis he applies to the Allende years. True, the case against Pinochet and his regime has been well-documented—the arrests, the torture and murder of opponents, the repression of democratic freedoms—and Falcoff does not have much to add to the record. But he is also curiously reluctant to give credit to the government where most unbiased analysts consider credit is due, namely, for reversing the growth of the public sector and opening the economy to market forces. Still, Falcoff does hit upon the true tragedy of the Pinochet era: ". . . Whatever the regime may have accomplished, it has clearly failed to reorient the [Chilean] public's basic values." Pinochet's agenda—implanting economic liberalism—was every bit as radical as Allende's, but it was advanced under a dictatorship that showed no regard for building a political consensus.

In previous writings, Falcoff predicted that Chile under Pinochet was heading the way of Nicaragua under Somoza, i.e., toward a revolution. He abandons that particular line of analysis here—events actually seem to be moving in a more encouraging direction—yet he does insist that the Pinochet era has yielded an "unexpected harvest" for the Chilean Left. One wonders how faithful this judgment is to Chilean realities. Similarly, one wonders whether, as is often argued on the far Right both in Chile and in the U.S., the splintering and brinkmanship long exhibited in Chilean democratic politics must inevitably consign the country to one form of dictatorship or another.

Whatever the answer to these questions, Pinochet's failure to "reorient" Chilean politics suggests that when democracy does return, the real achievements of his tenure in office may evaporate. But this, too, has much to do with what came before him. For exposing the roots of Chile's contemporary impasse in the fissured years of Salvador Allende, Mark Falcoff has performed a most important and badly needed intellectual service.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

(Act of August 12, 1970; Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code) Date of Filing: October 1, 1989. Title of Publication: Commentary. Frequency of Issue: Monthly. Location of Known Office of Publication: 165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022. Location of the Headquarters or General Business Offices of the Publishers: 165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022. Publisher: American Jewish Committee, 165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022. Editor: Norman Podhoretz, 165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022. Managing Editor: Marion Magid, 165 East 56th Street, New York, NY 10022. Owner: American Jewish Committee, 165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 (non-profit membership corporation incorporated by legislature of the State of New York). Known Bond-Holders, Mortgages, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None. For completion by Non-profit Organizations Authorized to Mail at Special Rates: The purpose, function, and non-profit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes have not changed during the preceding 12 months. Extent and Nature of Circulation: A. Total No. Copies Printed (Net Press Run): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 31,761. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 33,592. B. Paid Circulation: 1. Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, and Counter Sales: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 2,808. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 3,696. 2. Mail Subscriptions: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 26,929. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 28,488. C. Total Paid Circulation: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 29,735. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 32,184. D. Free Distribution by Mail, Carrier, or Other Means: Samples, Complimentary, and Other Free Copies: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 125. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 116. E. Total Distribution (Sum of C and D): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 29,860. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 32,300. F. Copies Not Distributed: 1. Office Use, Left Over, Unaccounted, Spoiled After Printing: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 1,200. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 585. 2. Returns From News Agents: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 701. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 707. G. Total (Sum of E and F): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months, 31,761. Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date, 33,592. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Bruce Lodi, Production Manager.

Idea Man

STRAIGHT SHOOTING: WHAT'S WRONG WITH AMERICA AND HOW TO FIX IT. By JOHN SILBER. *Harper & Row. 336 pp. $22.50.*

Reviewed by CHESTER E. FINN, JR.

THE typical college president today is a mild and colorless person with vague but leftish ideas, a product both of the contemporary academic culture and of a search-and-selection process that confers veto power on a hundred campus factions. All the more remarkable, then, that a man of John Silber's combative personality and decidedly non-leftist views should have been hired as the president of Boston University in 1970, at a moment when campuses across the land were erupting in protest against practically every value he cherishes. That Silber has retained his post through the ensuing two decades verges on the incredible.

Nor has Silber, like some of his long-serving counterparts elsewhere (including those at the helms of celebrated institutions

CHESTER E. FINN, JR., *who served as Assistant Secretary of Education from 1985 to 1988, is professor of education and public policy at Vanderbilt University and director of the Educational Excellence Network. His article, "The Campus: 'An Island of Repression in a Sea of Freedom,'" appeared in our September issue.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

across the Charles River in Cambridge), been content to preside quietly over ceremonies enshrining the conventional wisdom. Inventive educational ideas have bubbled continuously from Silber's office and, more often than not, have been brought to fruition—an impressive recent example being the contract given to Boston University to revamp the Chelsea, Massachusetts public schools. Somewhat less widely noted but perhaps even gutsier for the head of an institution that depends heavily on tuition revenues from students who could enroll elsewhere is Silber's campaign to discourage lusty (but unmarried) undergraduates from cohabiting in the university's dormitories.

Silber has some admirers on the BU campus but is not much loved. Students have often protested his policies. The head of the local chapter of the American Association of University Professors describes his as a "sleazy, fascist regime." There has been a huge turnover in the university's administrative offices. Even the trustees are said, on occasion, to have entertained doubts. But Silber has weathered every storm and forged ahead, with the result that BU today is a far more distinguished—and visible—institution than the one which hired him in 1970.

This has done John Silber no harm. (Neither, presumably, has a salary reputed to be among the highest paid to any American university president.) He is a frequent speaker at major conferences, a fixture in scholarly journals and on op-ed pages, a member of various panels and study groups (including President Reagan's Commission on Central America), an oft-mentioned candidate for sundry government posts, and a possible contender for elective office. He has flirted with running for governor of Massachusetts and would be a formidable Senate candidate, even in a state that rarely elects Republicans.

Whether John Silber is preparing to throw his hat into the electoral ring or to settle into the role of pundit, this volume, containing large patches of ideas he has previously voiced or written, serves as an excellent introduction to his mind and views, as well as to his temperament. Approximately two-thirds of *Straight Shooting* has to do with education and with cultural issues broadly speaking, while the balance is devoted to a mixed menu of other matters, foreign and domestic. Underlying all is a passionate anxiety about the decay of our moral and ethical foundations, our falling standards of personal and social behavior, our waning capacity to subject intellectual and political pieties to rigorous examination, and our faltering commitment to the defense of democratic values.

NATURALLY enough, it is in examining the shabby condition of American education, primary and secondary as well as higher, that Silber is at his best. His erudition and learning (his academic background is in philosophy) and especially his powerful sense of education as the agent of moral improvement and cultural transmission infuse half a dozen splendid—if perhaps excessively hortatory—chapters of general interest and several with narrower appeal (on such subjects as the role of the dean, the tenure system, the financing of higher education, and the "public" character of "private" colleges). Throughout, his message goes against the grain of practically every fashionable contemporary assumption.

Thus, after quoting Kipling's poem, "The Gods of the Copybook Headings," about the eternal verities that once were hammered home to schoolchildren via maxims on the pages of their primers, Silber comments:

> If we have the courage to face reality, we will know and proclaim these harrowing truths: that the degenerate society consumed in pleasure-seeking will not survive ("the wages of sin is death"), that the society that will not defend its freedom will lose it ("stick to the Devil you know"), that a society that consumes more than it produces will go bankrupt ("if you don't work, you die"). We ill serve ourselves and our children by preparing ourselves and them for a life of freedom and easy living that may never come and most certainly will never last. We had better prepare ourselves and them for reality—a reality that is infused with moral laws as surely as it is infused with physical laws; a reality in which there is no consumption without production, no freedom without defense, no self-fulfillment and no self-government without self-disciplined persons who govern themselves, persons who are capable of subordinating their desires long

Unabridged Books on Cassette Tapes provide a simple new way to cultivate the habit of finishing one book per week. Try listening to full-length recordings of books by the world's greatest minds. We specialize in books by Wm. F. Buckley, Jr., Norman Podhoretz, George Gilder, Thomas Sowell, Paul Johnson, Irving Kristol, Malcolm Muggeridge, Russell Kirk, Milton Friedman, G.K. Chesterton, Friedrich Hayek, Ludwig von Mises and others.

For free catalog call:
1 (800) 729-2665
For Rent or Purchase . . .
CLASSICS ON TAPE

THE MIDDLE EAST: UNCOVERING
THE MYTHS
A one day conference at
HUNTER COLLEGE
Lexington Avenue at 68th Street
Room 714 West
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3
10 TO 5:30
Conference participants include:
Edward Alexander, Jerold Auerbach, Eric Breindel, Steven Emerson, Walter Goodman, Alan Keyes, Cynthia Ozick, Daniel Pipes, Roger Rosenblatt, Eugene Rostow, Ruth Wisse and others.
Registration $30, including lunch
(Tax-deductible as allowed by law)
For tickets, enclose self-addressed stamped envelope. Please make checks payable to:
Writers & Artists for Peace in the Middle East
127 East 59th Street NYC 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enough to achieve the conditions on which freedom and survival, and even pleasure, depend.

As this passage suggests, John Silber harbors old-fashioned, not to say grimly old-fashioned, notions about education, and about life as well. He is, though, perfectly correct in asserting that America used to do a better job of schooling its children, mainly because our educational system once had a moral compass, held a firm commitment to knowledge, and insisted on good behavior and hard work. That is to say, it taught sound values and it practiced what it preached.

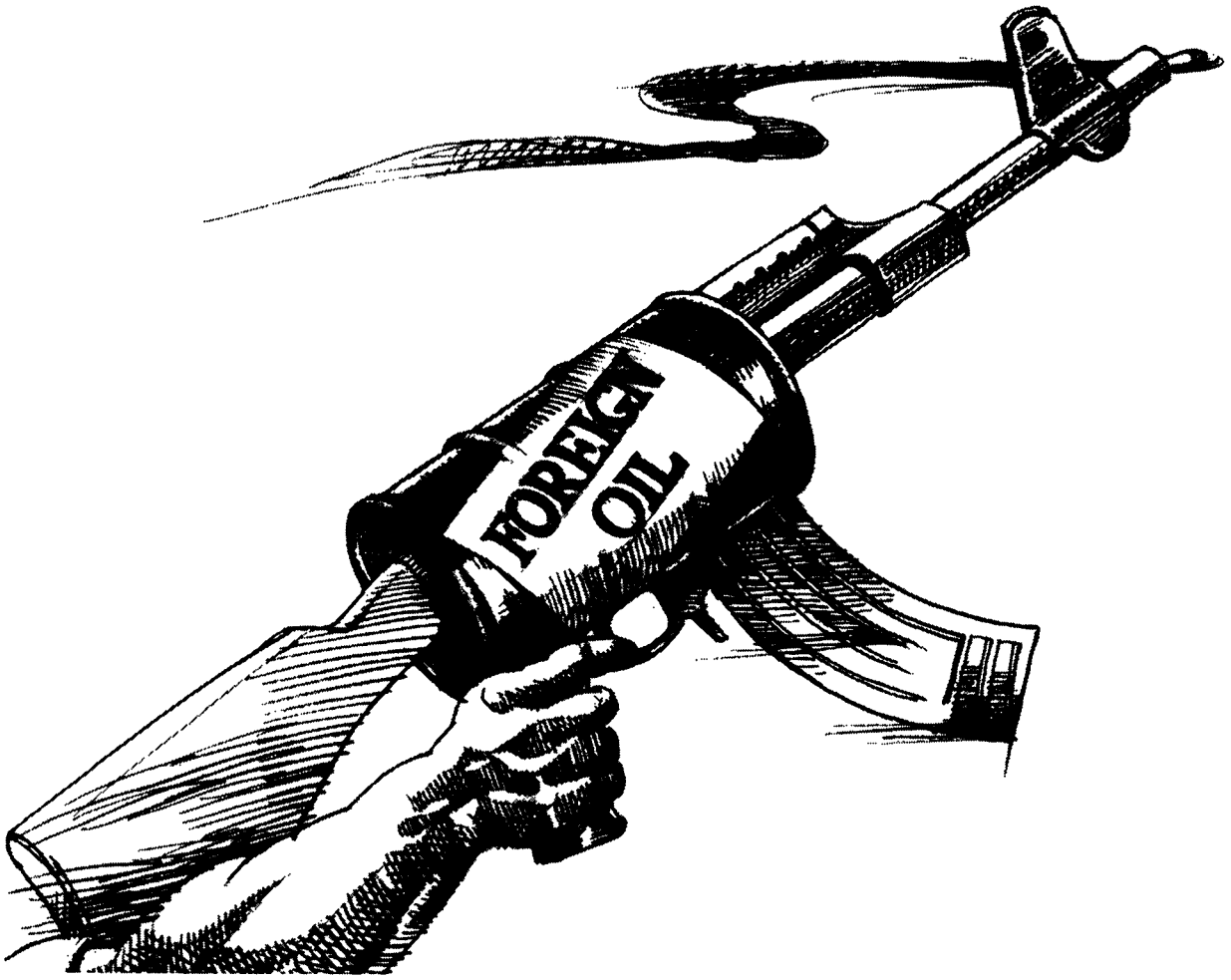
Silber is not, however, urging us to recreate today the educational arrangements of the 19th century. He has no intention of backtracking on the principles of universal participation or equality of opportunity—although, invoking Kant, he deftly distinguishes the latter from "equality of achievement," which can only be accomplished by "lowering the performances of the ablest individuals to those of the least able." He also favors more foreign-language instruction, beginning in the primary grades, especially in such seldom-studied tongues as Chinese, Russian, Japanese, and Portuguese, in order to foster effective international economic competition. This eagerness for a multilingual population does not, however, sway Silber an iota from his insistence on English as the common national language, or from his conviction that most bilingual education diminishes the opportunities available to students. In this connection he memorably quotes "Ernesto Ortiz, a foreman on a south Texas ranch, who said: 'My children learn Spanish in school so they can grow up to be busboys and waiters. I teach them English at home so they can grow up to be doctors and lawyers.' "

To my ear, the only false notes in this strong and honest book are played at the end, where the author attempts, for a measure or two, to radiate optimism. Silber here declares his conviction that "we are on the threshold of a moral awakening," a feeling he derives from "the growing dissatisfaction among our people with hedonism and materialism as a way of life" and from changes he insists he has observed in BU students: "a growing boredom with material things and a greater concern for matters of the spirit."

One hopes Silber is correct about this. There is indeed some evidence, at least from opinion samplings, that Americans are ready for more radical changes in customary practices and institutional assumptions than those favored by their experts and elites (and by most elected officials). Shortly after President Bush's September speech on drugs, for instance, pollsters reported considerable public sentiment to the effect that his plan was not tough enough. In late August, a survey of attitudes toward education indicated widespread support for such sweeping reforms as national curricula, norms, and tests. And so forth.

But how seriously should we take such findings? It is one thing to state a belief, quite another actually to alter behavior, especially if the proposed change means a reduction in easy pleasure and an increase in hard work. For Silber's optimism to be justified, assertion will have to be matched by exertion. There have been few signs of this happening, at least within the education system. But then, too, that enterprise has not been blessed with many leaders and spokesmen willing to press hard for such change. John Silber is one.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



AMERICA'S NEXT HOSTAGE CRISIS?

According to the latest figures, America is now importing almost 50 percent of all the oil we use. If our oil imports continue to rise, another energy crisis could be triggered, one that could hold America's economy hostage again.

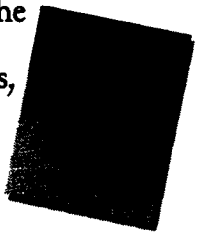
But the more we use nuclear energy, instead of imported oil, to generate electricity, the less we have to depend on foreign nations.

Our 112 nuclear electric plants already have cut foreign oil dependence by 4 billion barrels since the oil embargo of 1973, saving us more than $115 billion in foreign oil payments.

But 112 nuclear plants will not be enough to meet our growing electricity demand. More plants are needed.

We can help keep America from being held hostage and maintain our energy independence by relying more on our own resources, like nuclear energy.

For a free booklet on nuclear energy, write to the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness, P.O. Box 66103, Dept. RF17, Washington, D.C. 20035.

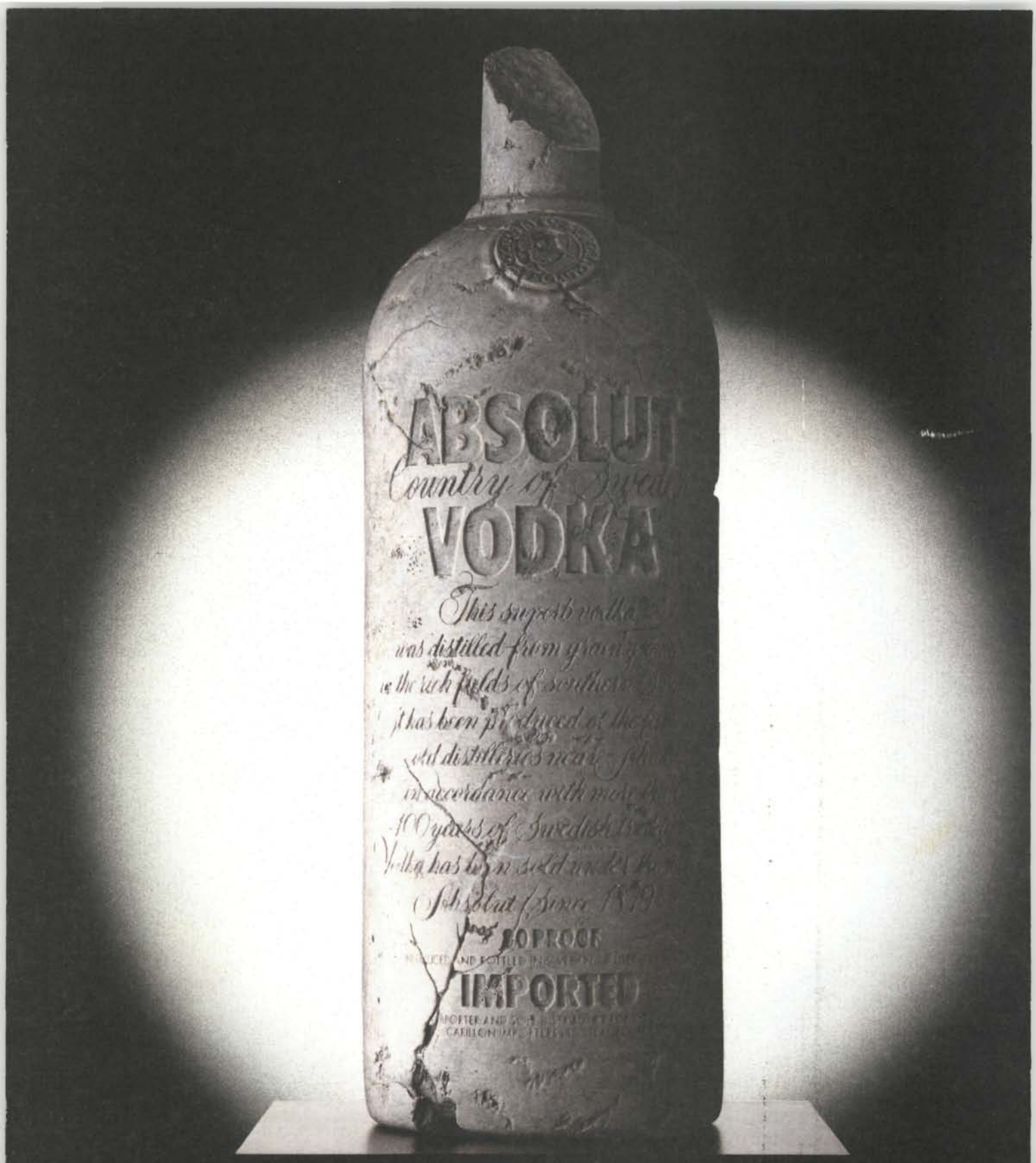


U.S. COUNCIL FOR ENERGY AWARENESS

Nuclear energy means more energy independence.

©1989 USCEA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



ABSOLUT ORIGINAL.

FOR GIFT DELIVERY OF ABSOLUT VODKA ANYWHERE, CALL 1-800-CHEER-UP (EXCEPT WHERE PROHIBITED BY LAW).
80 AND 100 PROOF VODKA/100% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS (ABSOLUT COUNTRY OF SWEDEN™) ©1988 CARILLON IMPORTERS LTD; TEANECK, NJ.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED